KASHMIR

Its Aborigines and their Exodus

Colonel Tej K Tikoo, Ph.D.



Exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir in 1989, was their seventh such exodus since the arrival of Islam in Kashmir, in the fourteenth century. This was precipitated by the outbreak of Pakistan-sponsored insurgency across Kashmir Valley in 1989. The radical Islamists targeted Pandits - a minuscule community in Muslim dominated society, creating enormous fear, panic and grave sense of insecurity. In the face of ruthless atrocities inflicted on them, the Pandits' sole concern was ensuring their own physical safety and their resolve not to convert to Islam.

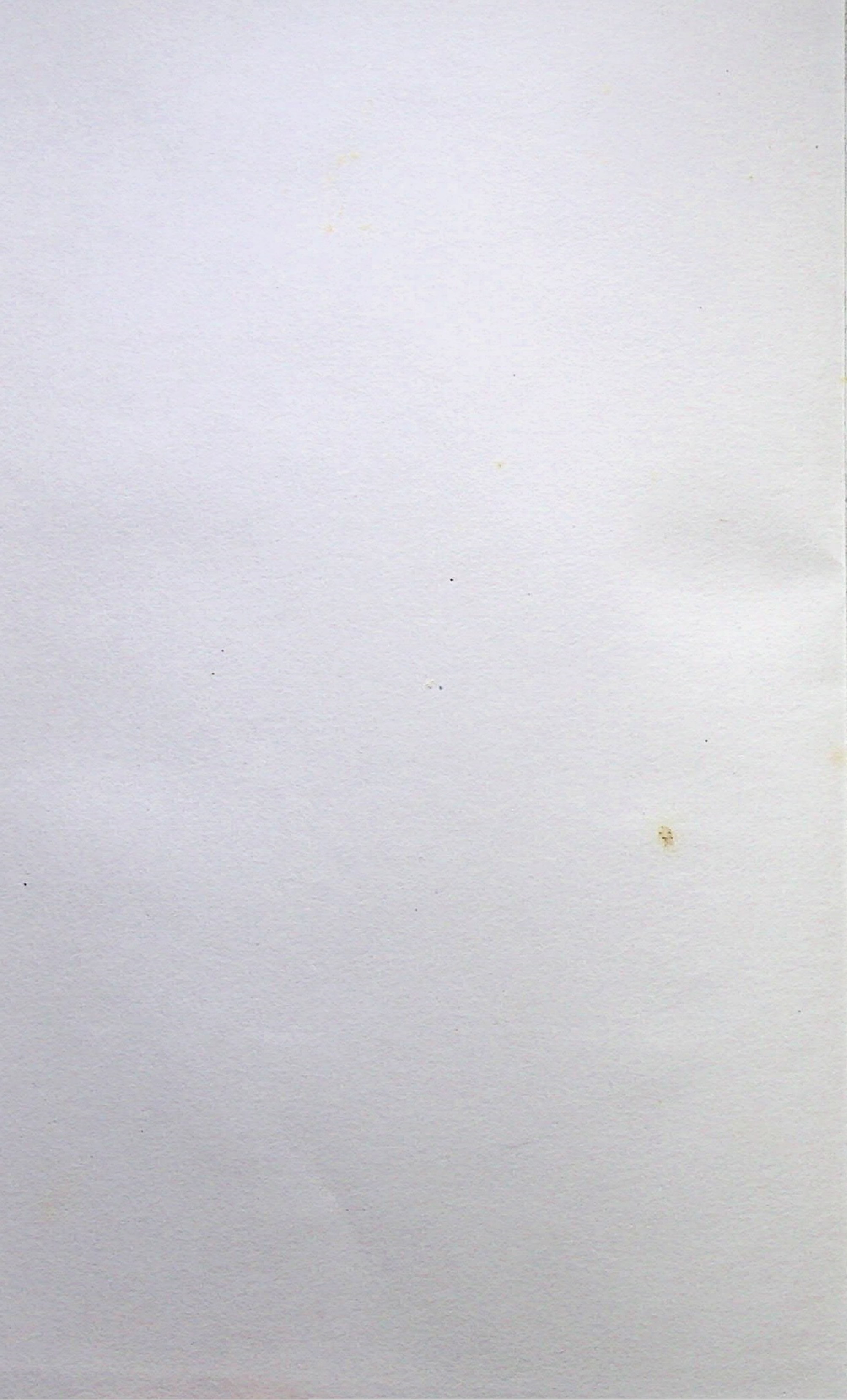
Over 350,000 Kashmiri Pandits were forced to flee en masse leaving their home and hearth. This was the single largest forced displacement of people of a particular ethnicity after partition of India.

Pandits' travails did not end with the exodus. The obstructive and intimidating attitude of the State administration towards the Pandit refugees, made their post-exodus existence even more miserable. The Government at the Centre too remained indifferent to their plight.

This book traces the Pandits' economic and political marginalization in the State over the past six decades and covers in detail the events that led to their eventual exodus.

In the light of ethnic cleansing of Pandits from the Valley, the book also examines some critical issues so crucial to India's survival as a multi-cultural, liberal and secular democracy.

Description of the Painting: HOPE AGAINST HOPE by VEER MUNSHI
Oil on Canvass 4/8 feet, year 1990.
Cover Painting: "Hope Against Hope" depicts Kashmiri Pandits in a queue for registration as 'migrants' in Jammu.



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This book is dedicated to my parents;

Pandit Radha Krishen Tikoo, a pious and a holy man

and

Smt Somawati Tikoo, an epitome of courage; an ocean of love and compassion.

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PREFACE

Anyone setting sights on Kashmir for the first time is instantly captivated by its natural beauty. Ringed by tall, majestic and snow covered mountains, Kashmir valley is endowed with natures' bounty. Over the centuries, its temperate climate, icy blue lakes, shimmering-white mountain streams, lush green meadows, fruit-laden trees and flower decked gardens have attracted millions round the globe to enjoy its enchanting beauty. From times immemorial poets, historians, travellers, adventurists and conquerors have sung paeans to its beauty. Some have called it a heaven on earth, while others have described it as the Switzerland of the east; and yet others as Venice of Asia. In the modern discourse on Kashmir, characterised by discord and disagreement, Kashmir's beauty is its only aspect on which there is complete unanimity. This then is the land, whose inhabitants Kashmiri Pandits have been since the dawn of history.

Being surrounded by some of the world's tallest mountain ranges, with its rugged terrain and harsh climate, the Valley has historically remained cut off from the outside world. It was only in the early years of 19th century that the modern means of transportation opened it up. Till then, the famous passes over its mountain ranges provided the only access to invaders, conquerors, travellers and traders into Kashmir valley. Those approaching it from the west, preferred the route leading upstream along Jhelum river, which was less steep and provided easy entry into the Valley. After motorised

transport became common, the Valley gradually got integrated into the sub-continental communication system, particularly with the north-western and western part of the country. However, in 1947 the communication system in Kashmir and the remaining part of the State of Jammu and Kashmir was rather rudimentary. Since then, huge investments in effort and resources have considerably improved the state of communications.

Today, looking at Kashmir's existing demographic profile, it is difficult to believe that it took only seven centuries to turn Kashmir's 100 per cent Hindu population into nearly 100 per cent Muslim population. Whereas Islam had conquered Sindh in eighth century and established itself firmly in north-west India by the middle of 12th century, in Kashmir it could do so only by the middle of 14th century. Extensive use of sword, coupled with aggressive proselytising helped establish Islam in Kashmir at a time when the power of Hindu kings was in decline. Ever since that decline, Kashmir valley has rarely seen peace for any appreciable length of time in its history. Bloodletting, persecution of Hindus, sectarian violence among Muslims, ruthless adventurers and its conquest by alien rulers have kept the Valley burning for major portion of the past seven centuries. Brief periods of respite during the reign of tolerant and enlightened kings, were only exceptions.

The aborigines of the Kashmir valley, locally called *Bhatta*, (otherwise known as Kashmiri Pandits the world over), were converted and assimilated into the new faith, Islam. But despite that, those who retained their original faith, continued to maintain their distinct identity with their own religious rituals and social customs, based on Kashmiri Shaivism, which are a shade different from those observed by the Hindus of rest of India. Kashmiri Pandits' religious thought and rituals, social customs and cultural moorings are deeply influenced by the philosophy of Kashmir's great

Shaivite philosophers, Abhinavgupta (10th century) and Kshemaraja (11th century). Kashmiri Shaivism's Trika (three-fold) philosophy, basically states that the 'Reality' is represented by 'transcendental' (*ara*), 'material' (*apara*) and a combination of the two (*paraapara*). The secluded location of Kashmir valley, its temperate climate and natural beauty, allowed great mystics, saints, *Sufis* and *Rishis* to delve deep into this philosophy and explore the mysteries of 'reality' and the 'purpose' of life. Over the centuries, Kashmiri Pandits produced a galaxy of such mystic poets, philosophers and *Rishis,* who further enriched this religious thought. It was the Kashmiri Pandits who carried Buddha's philosophy and Buddhist religious tenets to far away Tibet, centuries ago. It was Pandit Kalhana who wrote one of the most authentic and earliest known historical records of the events in Kashmir, called *Rajtarangini.*

Despite all these attributes, history has not been kind to Kashmir. From 14th century onwards, and for many centuries thereafter, Kashmir has rarely been left alone by invaders and adventurists, who tore apart the fabric of its society. Needless to say, the Pandits — its aborigines, bore the brunt of the ruthless religious persecution that resulted in their mass killings and many exoduses from Kashmir. Between the first quarter of 14th century and till the end of Afghan rule in Kashmir (1819), there were six major exoduses of Hindus from Kashmir. Almost all exoduses occurred when cruel Muslim rulers, driven by religious zeal and the spirit of *Jehad*, carried out ruthless genocide of members belonging to this community. The Pandits were offered three choices; to flee, die or convert to Islam. Lakhs got forcibly converted to Islam. By the time the British left India in 1947, Kashmiri Pandit population in the Valley had reached abysmally low figures. Even after that, due to several reasons, their migration outside the state continued. When the last forced exodus of Hindus of Kashmir took place in 1989–1990, there were less than half a million Pandits left in the Valley.

This is not to suggest that every Muslim ruler indulged in persecution of Pandits. Some kings and princes treated Pandits well, while others left them alone. The greatest among these was Zain-ul-Abedien (1420–1470 CE), who not only brought the exiled Pandits back, but also bestowed honors on them. While all this was going on, the religious synthesis that took place between the Buddhists, Hindu and Islamic philosophies, gave rise to the *Rishi/Sufi* order, which exercised enormous influence over the people, cutting across the religious divide. Hindu-Muslim synthesis, particularly, flowered as never before. Noor-ud-Din Noorani and Lalleshwari (former a Muslim and latter a Hindu, popularly called Nund Rishi and Lal Ded, respectively) were among its most renowned and revered proponents. Their message was, by and large, same; peaceful co-existence, disregard for material pursuits and unraveling the true meaning and purpose of life. This synthesis gave rise to the adopting of a tolerant form of Islam by large segment of Kashmiri Muslim population. In due course, this ethos of peaceful co-existence between the two communities, though short-lived, gave rise to a syncretic culture, called *Kashmiriyat*. Alas! This synthesis was frowned upon by many Muslim rulers and preachers, who felt that the interests of Islam in Kashmir could best be served by aggressive proselytising, even if it meant converting Hindus to Islam at the cost of death. These radical rulers and unrelenting preachers, who mostly came from outside the Valley, laid the foundations of radical Islam in Kashmir, which has survived to the present day.

Prior to their latest forced exodus in 1989–1990, Kashmiri Pandits had last witnessed a mass exodus of their community from Kashmir during the Afghan rule (1753–1819). After that, for nearly two centuries, during which Kashmir came to be ruled by the Sikhs, followed by Dogras (under the paramountcy of the British rulers), Kashmiri Pandits did enjoy some respite. After India gained independence from Britain, Kashmiri Pandits could not be faulted for

thinking that 'exoduses' were now a thing of the past. They assessed that even though they had been reduced to a minuscule minority in the sea of Muslim majority, being part of democratic, multi-cultural and secular India, was guarantee enough of their safety and security. Their belief in the Indian Government to safeguard their future was so strong that they took no precautions whatsoever to cater for any emergency. They even failed to organise themselves in a manner which could give them some degree of protection from the upcoming onslaught. Even after seeing the writing on the wall during the events of 1986, when large scale violence broke out against them in Anantnag district in south Kashmir, their faith in the justice of Indian democracy did not waver. Alas! Such thinking proved to be a fantasy.

After 1947, persecution of Kashmiri Pandits did not always manifest itself in violence against them; it could be in the form of subtle discrimination on daily basis; be it while seeking a job or admission in higher classes of learning; or a taunt directed against their religion or against India, etc. Nevertheless, Kashmiri Pandits continued to live in the Valley, even though migration in smaller numbers outside Jammu and Kashmir, particularly for seeking livelihood, remained a regular feature of their existence in Kashmir.

The latest exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley in 1989–1990, can be directly attributed to the unresolved issue of Kashmir problem. Its genesis lies in the partition of India, the British (and later United States) manipulations in furthering their own geo-political interests in this part of the world and Pakistan's repeated interventions in Kashmir. Taking the case to the United Nations (UN) by India ensured that the geo-political realities created by the Cold War proved decisive to finally seal this stalemate. India contributed in no small measure in complicating the issue. It was then that the seeds of the conflict which would eventually allow

radical Islam to claim Kashmiri Pandits as its victims, were sown.

Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, which gives the State a special status, prevented its total constitutional merger and created a permanent psychological barrier between the people of the State and the rest of India. In the long run, it provided an ideal breeding ground for the radical elements to strengthen themselves. The demand for preserving Muslim identity of the State, which Article 370 recognized, metamorphosed into the demand for autonomy; then it took the shape of demand for independence; and finally into a crusade for turning it into an Islamic State, to be governed by *Sharia*. By 1989, the situation in the Valley deteriorated to such an extent that Pakistan felt bold enough to embark on a proxy war to grab Kashmir. This led to the minorities, mostly Kashmiri Pandits, being threatened, killed and eventually being thrown out of the Valley.

Many countries in the world face the scourge of secession on the part of their various states/provinces, etc. Corsica in France, Basque in Spain, Falkland from Britain, Chechenya from Russia and Xinjiag from China — all want to secede. But none of these countries are willing to even discuss their secession, leave alone allow it to be pressurised by interested quarters. Compared to all of these, Kashmir has better credentials to be part of India, no matter what yard stick is applied to measure such credentials.

The long standing political problem of Kashmir was always an Islamic problem, but it was not an Islamist one. It was the success of Islamic revolution in Iran and the ousting of Soviet troops from Afghanistan a decade later, that encouraged Pakistan and its proxies in Kashmir to launch a violent *Jehadi* movement in Kashmir. When the insurgency broke out in 1989–90, the radical Islamists held complete sway. Killings of prominent Kashmiri Pandits on the one hand and targeting ordinary Pandits in unknown and far flung areas on the other, created enormous fear, panic and overwhelming sense

of insecurity. Through sustained campaign with the help of posters, hoardings and public address systems blaring out from pulpits of the mosques, Pandits were offered the same three choices that their forefathers had been offered centuries ago — *ralive, galive ya tsalive* - meaning, join us (implying conversion to Islam), die or run away. State machinery was totally subverted, paralysing those instruments of the administration which could be used to prevent their killings and instill a sense of security among the beleaguered community. Ensuring their own and their family members' survival became their top-most priority. This led to mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits. When they reached across the Pir Panjal Range, carrying with them whatever little they could on their person, they heaved a sigh of relief, thanking the almighty for sparing their lives, when many of their kith and kin had not been so fortunate.

After the exodus, Government of India's actions were dictated by the compulsions of unprincipled politics; not wanting to be seen as providing help to one religious group, which they felt would dent their 'secular' credentials. Be it as it may, the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir Valley has put a question mark on the secular credentials of India. Government and media indifference to the plight of the exiled community could perhaps be explained as being held hostage to the political and financial considerations, but the indifference of general public cannot be explained. May be the reason lies in what Sandhya Jain writes in the *Pioneer* of June 24, 2008, "Subordination induced by centuries of oppression led Kashmiri Hindus to adopt a peculiar self-apartheid and insist on having a distinct identity from other Indian Hindus; price was a chilling Hindu indifference to their predicament."

In the post-war decolonised world, India has all along been a shining example of a stable, democratic and secular country, with its unique diversity and commitment to multi-culturalism. Justifiably,

India had all along flaunted these credentials to reinforce its position on Kashmir, both within and without. Exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley was a severe blow to this very 'idea of India'. It was to save its face that every Indian institution underplayed the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley. Their acceptance of truth would amount to India itself approving what it repudiated all along — the 'Two Nation Theory.'

Nevertheless, old civilisations and ancient nations like India have a permanency about them. Yet both are not static. Imbued with dynamism, they change and evolve with the passage of time as past gives way to present, which in turn is the harbinger of future. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the present generation to record the truth, as it sees it, so that future generations know what the media and the government deliberately hid from them. Suppressing truth never helps, as Benjamin Disraeli once said, "The more extensive a man's knowledge of what has been done, the greater will be his power of knowing what to do." It is for this reason that I undertook this project; when the memories of exodus are still fresh and a large number of displaced still alive. It is my sincere hope that through this book, general public in India and abroad too gets exposed to the untold story of Kashmiri Pandits' forced displacement from the Valley. More importantly, despite many setbacks, India and its countless millions still believe in *Satyam eva Jayate* — 'Truth always prevails'. I am sure, as far as the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits is concerned, it will.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During the past over two decades, it has not been uncommon for Kashmiri Pandits to be accosted by people with queries about our exodus from Kashmir. Most queries by people, whom one met while travelling in a train or in the work place, etc., betrayed their ignorance about the actual happenings in Kashmir prior to and immediately after the forced displacement of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley. While some peoples' queries were based on the flawed understanding of the reasons behind the outbreak of insurgency in Kashmir in late eighties, others did not seem to be aware of the fact that Kashmiri Pandits were forced to move out of Kashmir at gun point; that they had to leave behind everything in order to save their lives and the honour of their womenfolk. It was usual to hear innocent questions like: 'How often do you go back to Kashmir every year?' 'Did you lock-up your houses before leaving Kashmir?' Who is taking care of your houses and property there?'

While in the Army, one was often at the receiving end of typical barbs, directed at me, particularly by senior officers. "Oh! You guys are...; you should have stayed on and fought back and not run away from Kashmir." In one of the seminars conducted by an Army organisation, I was horrified to hear a senior retired Lieutenant General of the Indian Army say, "Oh, Kashmiri Pandits were thrown out because they had persecuted the Muslims for decades." Similarly, during an official briefing of the Instructors from the prestigious Army War College, Mhow, at Headquarters 'Victor Force' (a top

formation responsible for conducting anti-insurgency operations in south Kashmir), the General Officer Commanding of the Formation said in reply to a question, "Kashmiri Pandits left the Valley of their own accord in 1989–1990; they left in search of greener pastures." When asked what is going to be the fate of their houses left behind in the Valley, the pompous General rubbed it in further by adding sarcastically, "In due course, their houses will fall under their own weight..." The group of instructors consisting of Colonels, Brigadiers and one Major General, of which I was a part, were on familiarisation visit to various formations of northern and western Command of Indian Army during 'Operation Parakram'.

It was apparent that general public was unaware of the true story of Kashmiri Pandits' exodus, while others were victims of calibrated disinformation campaign launched by the Muslim insurgents and their radical supporters. It was then that I decided to write an account of the exodus. Compiling details about the event was not a difficult task as the stories connected with the exodus of Pandits are now part of the community's folk-lore. I also talked to many people who had witnessed the events first-hand. For factual data, I relied heavily on the Report on the Impact of Migration on the Socio-economic conditions of Kashmiri Displaced People, prepared by Jammu and Kashmir Centre for Minority Studies (also known as the M.L. Koul Committee Report). White Paper on Kashmir prepared by Dr M.K. Teng and Sh. C.L. Guddu for Joint Human Rights Committee, also came handy in gaining proper understanding of the events leading to the exodus. I would also like to thank Sh. TN Razdan, President, Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch, for allowing me to use some of the material published by his organisation on various aspects of the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits.

Having been born, brought up and educated in Kashmir, I have been a witness to and a participant in a few of the historical events

that shaped the State's politics during the past 60 years. Experiencing some of Kashmir's vicissitudes after the merger of the State with India in 1947, I gained first-hand knowledge of the impact such vicissitudes had on the Valley's population in general and on Kashmiri Pandits in particular. While in the Army, being an infantryman, I spent over a decade in the State, mostly on the Line of Control (LoC). My last tenure there (1998–2001) exposed me to the ruthless Jehadis being infiltrated by Pakistan into the State to cause mayhem and murder. I must confess that at times, I felt sympathy for them on purely humanitarian grounds, because almost every one of them was eventually killed in the ensuing gun-battles with our troops. It was a sheer waste of young lives. They were, however, so brain-washed that they willingly served as gun fodder to satisfy their religious zealots and all-powerful Army back home, who had declared Jehad on India. Pakistani Army had its own axe to grind; most of its top ranking officers had experienced defeat in the 1971 war, first hand, when they were young officers with impressionable minds. Now, as decision-makers in Pakistan's most powerful institution, they could not let go of this opportunity to bleed India, and thus, avenge their humiliation.

I must put on record my debt of gratitude to many people who contributed with their generous assistance in helping me write this book. It is their precious contribution that made this book possible. Dr Shashi Shekhar Toshkani, a well-known literary figure and an authority on Kashmiri culture, reviewed the contents of the book and gave many valuable suggestions to enrich its contents. I cannot thank him enough for it. Dr MK Teng, an astute observer of the political developments of Jammu and Kashmir, gave valuable insights into the political developments in the State which had great bearing on the gradual political disempowerment of Kashmiri Pandits since independence and their eventual exodus from Kashmir. I sincerely thank him for his contribution. I am also grateful to my

brother-in-law, Sh. Bansi Pandit, a US-based author of many books on Hinduism, for having reviewed the manuscript and for editing the same so meticulously. His painstaking effort and his valuable inputs are greatly responsible for this book seeing the light of the day.

I would also like to sincerely thank Dr K.N. Pandita, a former Director of The Institute of Central Asian Studies and author of many books on Kashmir. His in-depth knowledge of Kashmir's culture, its past and present history, is well-known. Dr Pandita provided many valuable and authentic pieces of information, whose inclusion in the book has added to its readability. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my elder brother, Captain S.K. Tikoo (Retd.), a well-known figure in the political and social circles of Kashmir, for his many inputs. Being an authority on the grass-roots politics of the State and an active participant in nearly all contemporary political developments in Kashmir during the last six decades, his contribution in compiling this book has been immense.

I express my grateful thanks to one of India's renowned artists from Kashmir, Sh. Veer Munshi who, despite his hectic and busy schedule, agreed to design the jacket of this book, and that too at a short notice. I remain deeply indebted to him. I am also thankful to Colonel US Rathore (Retd.) for having allowed me to use some of his pictures in my book. Having spent many years of his service in Kashmir, his objective and dispassionate views on various developments in the State proved quite valuable.

I express my sincere appreciation and thanks to my friends Manoj Kumar and Mahesh Bisht; the former for having helped me with the logistics involved in writing this book during the last four years, and the latter for having spent hours in giving it a presentable shape. But for their diligent effort this book could not have been completed.

This book would certainly have remained just a medley of

disjointed thoughts in my mind but for the consistent support and encouragement I received from my wife, Usha, who persistently egged me on to give a shape to these thoughts. My sons too helped a great deal; Shehjar, my elder son, provided many relevant and valuable inputs in improving the content, particularly of the post-exodus period; and my younger son, Dr Manik, who helped by teaching me how to handle the computer efficiently while writing this book. I cannot thank them enough.

At the end I would like to thank Bharat Verma of Lancer Publishing House for having agreed to publish this book. I must accept that his ready willingness to do so took a lot of load off my back. I would also like to thank his staff, including Jitender, Sanjay and Birendra, who worked tirelessly on the production of this book.

The account given herein is the story of exodus as told by one of the refugees (the author) himself, whose family had fled from Kashmir while he himself was fighting the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam in Sri Lanka, as part of Indian Peace Keeping Force.

I hope this book is able to leave behind a record for future generations of uprooted Pandits, who are now spread in far corners of the world; a record of important events which eventually resulted in their flight from the land of Kashyap Rishi, Lalleshwari and Nund Rishi, whose inhabitants they have been from times immemorial. I hope this account sets the record straight because until now, only the Muslim majority, the more influential and the more vociferous voice, has been heard, over and over again and has attracted media attention, while the story of the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, the miniscule minority voice, has either been misreported or buried.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Following abbreviations occur frequently in the book. These are appended below:

AD	After Death
AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
AJKMC	All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference
ATM	Asia Transport Mafia
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BCE	Before Christian Era
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CAPF	Central Armed Police Force
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CENTO	Central Treaty Organisation
CFL	Ceasefire Line
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CPI	Communist Party of India
CM	Chief Minister
CMLA	Chief Martial Law Administrator
CMS	Centre for Minority Studies
CNN	Cable News Network

CPO	Central Police Organisation
DGP	Director General of Police
DNC	Democratic National Conference
ECG	Education Guarantee Scheme
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Area
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HAJY	Acronym for four Militant Commanders, namely, Hamid, Ashfaq, Javed, Yasin
HM	Hizb-ul-Mujahideen
HMT	Hindustan Machine Tools
IAS	Indian Administrative Service
IB	Intelligence Bureau
ICS	Indian Civil Service
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence
JKLF	Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front
JKVM	Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch
JeI	Jamat-e-Islami
JKSRTC	Jammu Kashmir State Road Transport Corporation
KAS	Kashmir Administrative Service
KP	Kashmiri Pandits
LET	Lashkar-e-Toiba (Tayyeba)
LoC	Line of Control
MC	Muslim Conference

MUF	Muslim United Front
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NA	Northern Areas
NC	National Conference
NCM	National Commission for Minorities
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NSSO	National Sample Survey Office
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
OGW	Over Ground Workers
PHE	Public Health Engineering
PF	Plebiscite Front
PoK	Pakistan Occupied Kashmir
PDP	Peoples' Democratic Party
PPP	Pakistan People's Party
PRA	Public Rural Appraisal
PTI	Press Trust of India
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
REC	Regional Engineering College
R&R	Rehabilitation and Resettlement
SRO	Special Routine Order
SSC	Staff Selection Committee
SBI	State Bank of India
SEATO	South East Asian Treaty Organisation
SKMIS	Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences
SKUAST	Sher-i-Kashmir University of Agricultural Science and Technology

SMHS	Sri Maharaja Hari Singh
TJP	Tehreek-e-Jaffaria Pakistan
UN	United Nations
UNO	United Nations Organisation
UNMOGIP	United Nations Military Observes Group in India and Pakistan
UNCIP	United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan
US	United States
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
VOs	Voluntary Organisation

1

ANCIENT KASHMIR: A BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCH

"Even the gods must die; But sovereign poetry remains, Stronger than death."

—*Kalhana*

Many scholars believe that the earliest human settlements in Kashmir date back to the Neolithic age. This fact has been scientifically established by putting the human skeletons found in Burzhom (near Srinagar) to carbon dating test. These findings place the human settlements in Kashmir around 2300–1500 BCE. These "skeletons have a corporeal resemblance to the skeletons of a significant portion of the contemporary Kashmiri population."[1] Though, some findings in Shopian (a district of Kashmir) date the human beings in the Valley to the Upper Paleolithic period.

Kashmir valley is dotted with pre-historic pilgrimage centers and ancient ruins of Hindu temples and Buddhist *Stupas* and *Viharas*. The imposing structures of these ruins, as seen today, establish the fact that since times immemorial, Kashmir has been an epicentre of ancient Indian civilisation. Two great Indic religions, namely, Hinduism and Buddhism, thrived here and interacted with each other in a manner that affected their outlook on spiritual and temporal matters. The tall snow-covered mountains, icy streams,

lush green meadows, resplendent water bodies, its splendid isolation and seclusion, and above all its temperate climate provided an ideal environment for deeper spiritual introspection and examination of existential realities. The evolution of pure monistic philosophy of Shaivism, known as *Trika Shastra*, is a unique product of this environment. Kashmiri Sufism, that emerged centuries later and barely survived the onslaught of rabid Islam can also be attributed to the same environment.

Antiquity

A fascinating narration in *Nilmat Purana*, a sixth century Sanskrit text, mentions that the name of Kashmir valley at one time was Satideva. At that time, it was a huge lake named Satisar (Lake of Goddess Sati, the consort of Lord Shiva, third member of Hindu Trinity). According to the popular legend, there lived a demon by the name of Jhalodabhava, (water borne). As a child he had been blessed by Lord Brahma (first member of Hindu Trinity, and god of creation) with the boon that his physical safety was guaranteed as no one would be able to destroy him when he remained confined under water. However, when he grew up, he became cruel, merciless and a law unto himself, causing widespread death and destruction that created sense of insecurity and fear among the inhabitants, the Nagas[2], the aborigines of the land, who lived in the high mountains surrounding Satisar.

Even Nila, son of Kashyap Rishi (grandson of Lord Brahma), under whose care Jhalodabhava had been brought up, was thoroughly exasperated. Nila, therefore, sought help from his father, Kashyap, who approached the Trinity. As a result, Lord Vishnu (second member of Hindu Trinity, and god of preservation of the universe) decided to kill Jhalodabhava. But the latter proved too clever. Knowing that he could not be killed under water, he took refuge in Satisar. Vishnu then decided to drain out the waters of Satisar in order to deny Jhalodabhava an indestructible refuge.

He directed his brother, Balbhadra, to cut the mountain towards the west of the lake near Khaddanyar in Varhamulla, present day Baramulla, which he did. Thereafter, as *Nilmata Purana* describes, "the water flowed out in violent rush with ferocity and great speed creating terrifying sound. It overflowed the tops of the mountains in huge waves literally touching the sky." With water having flowed and drained out, Jhalodabhava had no secure place to hide himelf in. He, therefore, played his last trick by resorting to magic. He created darkness all around to blind his detractors. Shiva now appeared on the scene. He removed the darkness, holding the sun and the moon in his hands. Jhalodhabava's last gamble had failed. On being spotted he was beheaded by Vishnu. It now began to be inhabited by people other than the original inhabitants. This resulted in the intermingling of the Nagas, Peshachs and Saraswat Brahmins.

It is believed that on the onset of first Manvantra,[3] the nine ancient Vedic rishis namely Kashyap, Maricha, Atri, Angira, Pulastya, Vishvamitra, Bhardwaja, Gautama and Jamdagni were the first to inhabit the new drained out land which came to be known as Kashyap *Mar*, meaning the abode of Kashyap. Over a long period of time, this name got corrupted to Kashmir, its present name. From the earliest times people from various countries have called it by different names, though all variants of the same name, Kashmir. The Greeks called it *Kaspatyros* or *Kasperia*; the Chinese called it *Ki-pin*, that included Gandhara too. Huen Tsang called it *Kia-shi-mi-lo*.

Even though a legend, the above-mentioned events are consistent with the principles of geological facts. The draining of the water from lakes is a common occurrence during a violent earthquake. Temporary darkness and re-emergence of light is a phenomenon that accompanies a particularly inclement phase of weather, cloud burst, etc. Based on the Valley's physical features, geologists believe that a major volcanic tremor occurred 100 million years ago, which opened

the mountain wall at Baramulla, draining away the former great lake. The huge discharge of water must have flowed with terrifying speed washing away and submerging big towns and villages that came in its way.

It would, therefore, not be out of place to suggest that after bursting through the Kashmir mountains, the gushing waters from this Pleistocene lake, covering the entire valley, flowing at tremendous speed, entering the plains of Punjab and completely submerging the civilisations of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro, in the process destroying all human life. This perhaps, could be the reason why Harappa and Mohenjo Daro civilisation disappeared. It is also being conjectured that most of the streams that fed Satisar also fed Saraswati River, with waters from the valley flowing in the southerly direction. However, once the cleft materialised at Baramulla, the water of Satisar flowed out in the opposite direction, leaving Saraswati basin dry. Some geologists argue, "That it is practically impossible for the feeders from Satisar to have flowed underneath four major rivers, namely, Chanderbhaga (Chenab), Irwati (Ravi), Bipas (Beas) and Stardu (Satluj), before discharging their waters into Saraswati. They further insist that desiccation of Satisar and drying up of Saraswati were not simultaneous events but separated by a period of ten to twelve millennia."[4]

On September 10, 2011, Micheal Brookfield, Professor at the University of Boston, Massachusetts, said in Srinagar, "The geological evidence in Guryal ravine in the vicinity of Srinagar city indicates the possibility of Tsunami."

"Brookfield said Guryal section closely resembles the K-T boundary section in Texas and may have been formed in the same way from a waning Tsunami. Guryal ravine site is one of the world's richest fossil sites, being rated by geologists as the world's premier sites for the study of species from the Permian period (299–251 million years ago)."[5]

Be that as it may, the drying of Saraswati resulted in Aryan Saraswat Brahmins, living on the banks of Saraswati, to disperse in various directions, with one large group entering Kashmir valley on the invitation of Nila, who followed his father's advice in the matter. Some historians have placed these events somewhere around the beginning of *Saptrishi Samvat,* 5084 years ago. With the passage of time these people came to be known as *Bhatta* in Kashmir. The word is derivative of the Sanskrit term *Bhartri,* which means doctor, scholar or intellectual. It is much later that they came to be called Kashmiri Pandits or the Aryan Saraswat Brahmins of Kashmir.

As mentioned earlier, recent excavations at Burzahom, indicate that there was habitation in the Valley around 2000 BCE. Geological discoveries of aquatic and plant life confirm that Kashmir valley was once a huge lake. The existence of *Karewa* or plateaus (locally called *wudar*), mostly to the west of river Jhelum and protruding towards the east, also point to their long submerged existence under water. The *karewa* is flat topped, plateau-like mud formation, whose height rises to about 366 metres from the surrounding ground level, with sides sloping and separated from each other by ravines. Likewise, the Archeological Survey of India's national museum in New Delhi confirms the existence of Saraswati River before it dried up. As Michel Danino writes, "Since 1889, generations of Indian and non-Indian geographers, archeologists, indologists believe that river Ghaggar's bed was that of Vedic Sarasvati." He further says "...Sarasvati was major life line of the Harrappan civilisation, suggesting a connection between it and Vedic culture."[6] He also explains the crucial role that this river played in sustaining the Indus Valley Civilisation, which he calls by its other names, Indus Swaraswati Civilisation, Harrappan Civilisation and Indus Civilisation. According to some experts, the present day seasonal Ghaggar River is what the mighty Saraswati River once was. The fact that River Swarswati[7] dated back to Vedic period is established by the fact that *Rig Veda* (10.75.5) mentions it

over several times, and asserts that the river lay between Yamuna and Sutlej.

Early History

Though Kalhana's account of Kashmir in *Rajtarangini*[8] begins with the 'Mahabharata' war, it does not throw much light on the events prior to 273 BCE (Emperor Ashoka era). It is mentioned in *Vanaparva* of *Mahabharata* that Pandavas spent some time in Kashmir during their long exile and even went to *Varshaparva Ashram* in China from there. It is believed that during Vedic era, bulk of Kashmir was still under water but retained its importance because "Mujavant mountain, where Soma grew, was located here."[9]

Based upon Kalhana's description Gonanda I seems to have been the first known king of Kashmir who ascended the throne in circa 2449 BCE. He was a relative and friend of Jharasandha, King



Ruins of houses where Pandavas are believed to have lived, locally called *Pandav Lari* (Houses of Pandavas,) at Awantipur.

of Magadh. The latter was the father-in-law of Krishna, King of Mathura. Gonanda went to the assistance of Jharasandha, but was defeated and killed by Krishna. Jharasandha's son, Damodara, then became king of Kashmir. To avenge his father's death, he proceeded to fight Krishna. But he too was killed. Yashovati, Damodara's widow, who was pregnant at that time, ascended the throne with the support of Krishna. When a son was born to her, he was formally crowned as the king under the name of Gonanda II. Being an infant he was not asked for help either by Kauravas or Pandavas during the great Mahabharata war. *Nilmat Purana* states that when Yashovati was made to sit on the throne by Krishna, the latter declared that "Kashmir is Parvati and a portion of Shiva is its king." This points to the high esteem in which Lord Krishna himself held Kashmir as an abode of Shiva and his consort, Parvati. It is believed that Pandavas also ruled Kashmir after defeating Kauravas in the Mahabharata war. Even today, some ruins in Kashmir, are known as *Pandav Lari*, meaning, "the houses of Pandavs." Thus ancient Kashmir was ruled by Gonanda II in due succession. His rule was followed by 43 weak and inefficient kings who left no footprint on the history. It may be mentioned that the *Naga* (snake) worship was a dominant religion in Kashmir in the fourth and third century BCE.

273–232 BCE: Buddhism

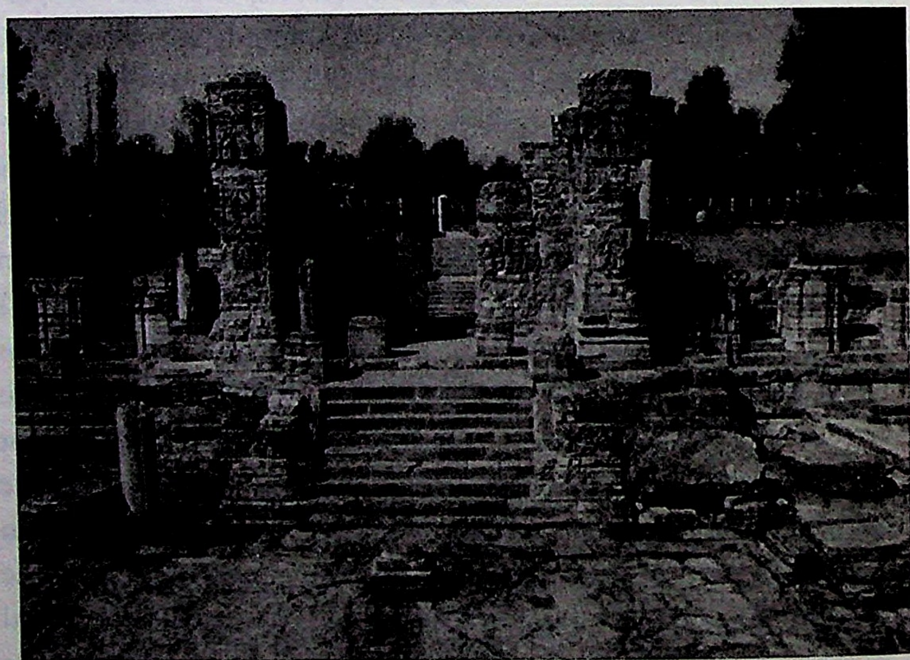
Ashoka: Ashoka came to Kashmir with 5,000 Buddhist monks to preach his newly embraced religion, Buddhism. He founded the capital town of Srinagar (City of Wealth) around 250 BCE at Pandrethan, where a centuries' old temple in the middle of a spring still exists in excellent shape (the present day Badami Bagh cantonment area). The original name appears to have been either Puranadhistan or Pandavsthan, meaning an ancient place or the abode of Pandavas. As late as 1905 CE, the Archeological Survey of India, during excavations, found Buddhist idols and Hindu images

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just a short distance towards the hills near Pandrethan.

A massive granite sculpture of Shiva that has been placed in the Sri Pratap Museum in Srinagar was also excavated during the same period. Ashoka had great reverence for Shaivism and constructed a Shiva temple at Vijeshwari, the present day Bijbehara. However, the arrival and rise of Buddhism in the Valley created an expected reaction among Brahmans of Kashmir. This gave rise to a long struggle between the two rival ideologies. Nevertheless, Buddhism flourished



Shiva temple at Pandrethan

in the valley during the reign of Ashoka, Kanishka Sureonadeo, Simhadeo, and Sundarasen. Ashoka's son, Jaloka, followed thereafter, and became independent King of Kashmir. He reverted back to Hinduism and tried to revive the religion by building many temples. He was succeeded by his son Damodar II. He ruled the Valley from Damodar Karewa (where the present day Srinagar airport is located). He also constructed a magnificent palace there.

100–631 CE: Kushan Dynasty

Kanishka of Kushan dynasty from Gandhar ruled north-west and parts of central India, with his capital at Purushapur, the present day Peshawar. He held the Great Council of Buddhists (also called the Fourth Buddhist Conference) at Kanishpur in Kashmir. Some historians and archeologists believe that the conference was held at Harwan, located on the fringes of Srinagar city towards its northwest. This conference fixed and expounded the sacred canon that led to the foundation of Mahayana Buddhism. It was presided over by two eminent scholars, Asvaghosha and Vasumitra and was attended by 500 monks. A number of Kashmiri scholars like Kumarajiva (384–417 CE), Shyakyashri Badra (405 CE), Ratnavajr, and Shyama Bhatta (fifth century CE) and others went to China and Tibet to preach Buddhism. The greatest Buddhist philosopher, Nagarjun, also lived in Kashmir. Subsequently, Huvishka founded the town of Usar, located to the south-east of Baramulla. It was during his rule that Greek influence, so evident in the Valley, made inroads here.

436–497: King Ranaditya ruled from his capital at Rainawari, Srinagar.

515: Mirakhula the white Hun, rose to power in north India after the decline of Gupta Empire. Following his defeat in the war against the confederacy of chieftains, he ran away to Kashmir and seized power there and ruled for some time, after which the local rulers came back into reckoning.

600: Meghavana and Pravarasena, part of Gonanda II dynasty, are the two noteworthy rulers who left their imprint on the history. The former was a virtuous king of Buddhist leanings who made great efforts to prevent killings of birds and animals. The latter moved his capital to present day Srinagar, which at that time was known as Pravarasenapura. He was the first to build a bridge across Jhelum with boats. During his time, King Vikramaditya, whose capital was located at Ujjain in central India, exercised loose suzerainty over Kashmir. It was during this period that the struggle between Buddism and Hinduism came to an end. With the re-emergence of Hinduism, Brahmans regained their supremacy during the reign of Nara I.

631–855 CE: Karkotta Dynasty

The Hindu Kingdom of Kashmir reached great heights with the ascendance of the Karkotta dynasty founded by Dhurlabhavardhana in 631. During this period Kashmir became a great power, commanding respect and tribute from its neighbouring kingdoms. He extended his empire to Poonch, Rajouri, Taxila and Hazara and controlled the trade routes between Afghanistan and Kashmir. During his rule, the celebrated Chinese traveller, Huein Tsang visited Kashmir and stayed there for two years (631–633). He was extended all hospitality and assistance by the king to study Hindu religious scriptures in Sanskrit. King Harshavardhana, who ruled India from Kannauj during this period, exercised loose suzerainty over Kashmir. Historians are unanimous that Kashmir at that time possessed four Ashok Chaityas, each containing a small relic of Bhuddha's body. The sacred tooth relic of Buddha was also with the King, but was taken away by Harshvardhana.

724–761: Lalitaditya Muktapida[10] (*mo-to-pi* in Chinese) one of India's greatest soldier-statesmen, ruled during this period. He was the greatest ruler of Karkotta dynasty who presided over his empire

for 37 years. Though a staunch Hindu, he was also sympathetic to Buddhism. His conquests were mind-boggling, with his territory extending as far as River Cauvery in the south, Afghanistan in the west, Gaud (modern north Bengal) in the East and Ladakh and portion of Tibet in the north. Some historians even credit him with the conquest of Iran and Badakshan. He had a brilliant Chinese general in his service, named Cankuya. During his rule, Kashmir's power and prestige truly reached its zenith.

Besides being a great warrior, Lalitaditya was also a great builder. The imposing ruins of Parihaspura (city of pleasures) in Ganderbal district of Kashmir bear witness to the magnificent capital he built for presiding over his vast empire. However, Parihaspura soon lost its importance as Lalitaditya's son, Vajraditya "removed the royal residence from there and later the drainage operations by Suyya brought the confluence of Vitasta and Sindhu from Parihaspura to Shadipur, which naturally affected the importance of the town."[11] His other great legacy was the construction of the sun temple at Martand in south Kashmir. Built over Mattan Karewa, the imposing ruins of the temple, also called the Cyclops of the east, even today present a picture of splendour. Lalitaditya also built the town of Phalpura and Parontsa; the former is today a village near Shadipur in Kashmir and the latter, the present day Poonch. He is also credited with having built the towns of Lalitapura (modern Latapur), Lokpunya (modern Lukbhavan).

He patronised and encouraged great scholars of his time, like Bhavabhuti, Manorath, Sakhdanta, Damodar Gupta and Udhata Bhata. This bears testimony to the fact that he was great patron of art and literature. His death is shrouded in mystery. Some historians say, "He perished through excessive snow storm in a country called Aryanaka (modern Iran). Another version made him end his life by suicide in order to escape being captured when separated from his army and blocked on a difficult mountain route."[12] Lalitaditya





Ruins of Sun temple at Martand.

was followed by a chain of weak and inefficient kings who proved unworthy successors of this great king. This led to dethronements, political turmoil and general state of chaos. However, there was one exception to this sorry state of affairs; that was Jaypida who ruled from 764–795 and brought about some semblance of stability.

855–939 CE: Utapala Dynasty

855–883: Avantivarman was the first Vaishnavite ruler of Kashmir. He built the new capital of Awantipur, where he constructed two magnificent temples, the ruins of which exist even to this day. He brought back normalcy and restored stability to the chaotic conditions prevailing in Kashmir at the time. He carried out great engineering works through his chief engineer, Suyya, reclaiming large tracts of land from Wullar Lake, by redirecting the course of Vitasta River(later renamed Jhelum). Many villages were created on this reclaimed land, chief among them being Suyapur, present day Sopore. He put into place numerous anti-flood measures and dug out many canals that increased food production. During his rule prosperity once again returned to Kashmir. He was a pious man who would often listen to *Bhagvad Gita*. In fact, he is said to have died while listening to the epic. The great Shavite philosophers of his time were Kayatacharya, Somananda, Muktakantaswami, Shiva Swami, Anandvardana and Kallata.

883–902 Shankarvarman indulged in unnecessary military expeditions. During one such expedition he defeated Lalliya, the Brahman ruler of Kabul. Thereafter, he lost no opportunity to humiliate Brahmans. He confiscated their temples and properties, resulting in a prolonged struggle between Brahmans and Kayasthas (people specialising in scribal/literate occupations). Though he created markets for trade by conquering neighbouring states, he nullified these gains by levying additional taxes. He also resorted to forced labour, called *Begaar*.[13] He disturbed peace by ignoring the interests of agricultural feudal chiefs, known as *Damar* who, as a result, rose in revolt. At his death he left a legacy of a society at war with itself. Shankarvarman founded the city of Shankarpur, where he constructed a temple. The place is today known as Pattan.

922–933: For 20 years after Shankarvarman's death, instability

reigned supreme in Kashmir when one weak king followed another. However, situation seemed to stabilise when Chakravarman, with the help of Damars and King's bodyguard (*Ekangas*) seized power. The peace, nevertheless, was short-lived as Damars rose in revolt and killed the King. This set in motion the decline of Utpala dynasty.

Despite all the political turbulence of the period, Shavism flourished, with scholars such as Mahadev, Prajnarjuna, Pradyuman Bhatta, Utpalacharya and Rama Kantha making significant contributions to further enrich its literature.

939–1128 CE: Didda and Lohara Dynasty

950–1003: Didda, daughter of great Lohar Chief, Simhraj, the ruler of Lohara (Lohrin in present day Rajauri district) and granddaughter of Shahi king of Kabul, was one of the most remarkable women of her time. She was Kshatriya and married second Gupta King, Ksemagupta. She dominated the scene in Kashmir, first as queen and then as a regent for her son and grandsons, and finally as a direct ruler.

Didda had complete sway over her husband and king, Kesmagupta, who consulted her on every matter concerning the governance of the state. Gradually, without her consent, the state administration did not move. In due course, the reins of the king came to rest so completely in the hands of Didda that Kesmagupta came to be known as *Diddaksema* (henpecked). When the king died in 958, Didda wanted to commit *Sati*, but the courtiers prevailed over her, as they were jealous of the chief minister, who would have otherwise taken over the kingdom. She, therefore, became the regent of her minor son, King Abhimanyu, and vanquished her adversaries one by one. She ruled ruthlessly, though effectively, for 14 years as the regent. When Abhimanyu died in 972, she installed his son Nandigupta on the throne, though she kept the reins of power firmly

in her hands. After the death of her son, Abhimanyu, she devoted a great deal of her time to developmental activities, constructing a number of temples and monasteries. In 975, she installed Bhimagupta, the second son of Abhimanyu, and her grandson, on the throne. Bhimagupta soon became upset with her grandmother's ruthless ways and started actively opposing her. Didda, without losing any time, put him under arrest. In 980, Bhimagupta died in jail. Didda now ascended to the throne herself, assuming the title of Empress.

Didda was extremely beautiful, highly intelligent, but wayward and headstrong. She captivated many courtiers by showering many favours, including getting physically intimate with them, and then would get them killed secretly, when the opportunity presented itself. Her last paramour was a young horseman, Tunga, who was later made commander-in-chief. He outlived her when she died in 1003.

Didda was one of the most enigmatic characters of history, attracting condemnation and admiration at the same time. She survived the politics of intrigue, murder and debauchery for about 50 years and held the troubled kingdom together by sheer competence and courage. But the incalculable harm that she caused by sinister and sinful ways and by spreading moral pollution all around had grave consequences later. After ruling for 25 years, when she became too old to rule, she was able to manipulate the crown for Sangramrajha, son of her brother Udairaj, ruler of Lohara. Thus a new dynasty, Lohara, came to power. They were also known as Lohana, a short form for Lohar Ranas. History records their rule in Kashmir under two dynasties, namely Lohara Dynasty I and Lohara Dynasty II. Effectively, Lohara Dynasty II lasted till 1286, beyond which followed decades of anarchy and mayhem, resulting in the invasion of Muslim rulers and establishment of Muslim rule in the valley by 1338.

1003–1101 CE: Lohara Dynasty-I

1003–1028: One of the greatest warriors the Loharas produced was Dada Jasraj (970–1000). His life was an embodiment of courage and valour. He killed Sabuk-Tigin, father of Mahmud Ghazni in 997 CE in his own court in Kabul, in presence of his courtiers and still managed to escape along with his companions. It was to avenge his father's assassination that Mahmud Ghazni attacked Loharpradesh (present day Lohriin in Rajouri district of Jammu region) thrice, but failed to capture it every time. It was in one of these attacks that Dada Jasraj lost his life.

After conquering Iran, Turkey, Punjab and other parts of India, Mahmud Ghazni captured Nagarkot Fort in Kangra (in present-day Himachal Pradesh). It was from here that Ghazni launched his first major attack on Kashmir in 1015. He camped in Tosha Maidan,[14] near Lohkot fort. However, his forces were surrounded by Sangramraja's troops under their able Commander-in-Chief, Tunga on one side and the army of Afghanistan, led by Trilochanpal, King of Afghanistan himself, on the other. In the mountainuous terrain Ghazni's troops suffered heavily and he beat a hasty retreat. Ghazni, however, could not take his eyes off Kashmir. In 1021, he again attacked Kashmir; this time, making Lohkot fort his base. He was again defeated comprehensively, bringing to an end his dream of capturing Kashmir. However, Ghazni did succeed in capturing Swat Valley, known as Udyana (garden) under its Bhuddhist kings. Ghazni settled two tribes there, namely, Swati and Dalazak. Swati being a larger tribe, the place thereafter, came to be known as Swat.

It was during the regime of Sangramraja that Kashmir came into contact with Muslim invaders. When Mahmud Ghazni annexed Punjab, most of the tribes on the borders of Kashmir embraced Islam. Even after their conversion to Islam, these people continued to visit Kashmir as traders, wanderers and even missionaries. Some of

these tribes settled in the valley and ventured into propagating their new religion.

1028–1063: Ananta was married to beautiful princess Suryamati alias Subhata, daughter of King of Kullu of Kangra. Her two brothers, Rudrapala and Didapala came to Kashmir, where they earned the trust and confidence of the king. However, being extremely unscrupulous and dishonest, they soon indulged in embezzling the state treasury. Coupled with his own extravagant habit of chewing betel leaves which cost him a huge amount of money; his treasury became empty soon enough. But his wise and assertive wife took hold of the affairs and rebuilt the state finances. The death of the two worthless princes during the same period proved providential. Soon, the king achieved his past glory to the extent that he now started annexing the neighbouring territories. After some time, Suryamati insisted that the king should abdicate in favour of his son, Kalasha. After initial hesitation, he did so in 1063. But no sooner did Kalasha get the throne, he started ill-treating his father and forced him to leave the palace and seek shelter in Parnotsa (modern day Poonch). This led to many altercations between the king and his queen over the actions of his son. On one such occasion, the king could not tolerate something that the queen had said and committed suicide by thrusting a dagger through his abdomen. Suryamati, overtaken by remorse, followed suit by jumping on his pyre. It was during this period that Kashmir came under the influence of Shahi princes of Punjab, who took refuge there from Ghazni's attacks.

1063–1089: Kalasha ascended the throne, followed by Utkarsha.

1089–1101: Harsha, though a poet and lover of fine arts, will be remembered for his extravagance and profligacy. To support his over indulgence in luxury, he plundered temples and looted their wealth, particularly their gold and silver idols, which he got melted.

In the process, he dishonored deities, getting urine and excrement poured over them by naked mendicants. Some attribute it to the influence of Islam. Kalhana describes him as a *Rakshasa*, meaning 'demon'. For carrying out these despicable acts he made use of Muslim generals, whom Kalhan called *Turushkas*. It was during this period that Muslims appeared as a class in the political field and thereafter, began to consolidate their hold. To add to the peoples' woes, natural calamities like famine and plague struck in quick succession to fill the cup of their miseries, which now overflowed. As a result, they rose in revolt under Uchala and Sussala, the two princes, who seized power after assassinating Harsha and his son, Bhoja.

1101–1286 CE: Lohara Dynasty II

1101–1111: The duo (Uchala and Sussala), particularly the latter, tried to undo the damage done by Harsha. They reformed administration, removed corrupt officials and amended the criminal code by making delinquents do social work, thus attempting to reform them rather than sending them to jail. However, Sussala proved to be highly conceited and vain and given to fits of anger. In due course, the duo was succeeded by some inefficient and incompetent rulers who did more harm than good. History records nothing much about their reign.

1128–1155: One of the great kings of Lohara dynasty, Jaisimha, despite taking over the reins in politically unstable conditions, when civil strife was the order of the day, succeeded in restoring law and order. He repaired temples and restored to them their old glory. His reign was considered an age of Vedic Renaissance in Kashmir. *Shakti upasana*, (worship of Shakti, another name of Divine Mother) was very common and many shrines were built during this period.

1155–1301: This period saw the beginning of the decline of Hindu kings of Kashmir. During the reign of Gopadeva (1171–1180) Brahmans gained great supremacy and consolidated their position.

This,. however, was short-lived as Damaras, the feudal chieftains, joined hands with Lavanyas and other smaller tribes to hit at the very roots of Brahman dominance. The latter strove to regain their lost glory by trying to capture power through two of their prominent community members, Kshuksa and Bhima. But the threat of Damara feudal lords prevented them from succeeding in their mission. This event took place during the reign of Jassaka (1180–1198).

Rama Deva then ascended to the throne (1252–1273) with the help of Brahmans. But the first thing the king did after assuming power was to humiliate the same Brahmans. They, therefore, conspired against him, but to no avail. Prompt reprisal followed immediately in the form of reign of terror that was let loose against them. They were looted, plundered, killed and crushed in the most barbarous manner. In the history of Kashmir, it was the first direct assault on them.

The next dynasty that we see on the historical horizon of Kashmir is that of Damaras, (1286–1301) the feudal chieftains who made Lukbhavan as their headquarter. Their reign, instead of arresting the decline in the fortunes of Kashmir, contributed even more, through their actions of omission and commission, to its further decline.

1301–1320: Suhadeva ascended to the throne in 1301. He married Kota Rani, daughter of his Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief Ram Chandra. Kota, an exceptionally beautiful woman, helped her father in managing the affairs of the state. Some of the most momentous events of Kashmir's history, which had far-reaching and irreversible consequences later for the Valley and its people, took place during this period. First was the invasion by ferocious Mongol warrior and adventurer, Zulqadar Khan or Dulcha, who hailed from Turkistan. His army of 70,000 Mongol and Turkish soldiers consisted of both foot soldiers and horsemen. In the face of impending danger, Suhadeva exhibited woeful cowardice. He

tried to buy off the invaders by paying a huge sum of money, but failed. He then fled to a neighbouring province of Kishtwar, across Pir Panjal Range, leaving his people to the mercy of the marauding invaders.

According to *Baharistan-i-Shahi*,[15] people of Kashmir died like "Insects in fire," as Dulcha and his soldiers killed everyone they could lay their hands on. Those who fled to the forests and mountains were pursued, captured and killed. Men were put to the sword and women and children were sold to the merchants of Khita (Turkistan), whom the invaders had brought along. All the houses in the villages and cities were burnt along with the grains. Dulcha dealt a fatal blow to Hindu kingdom. In the words of Jonaraja, Kashmir became almost like region before creation. Dulcha took with him 50,000 Brahmans as slaves. But while crossing Devsar Pass, God's wrath now intervened. Heavy thunder storms, rains and snow buried them all. Not a soul survived; neither the soldiers nor the Brahmans. The gloom and despondency of the valley was further aggravated as winter arrived soon thereafter. Chaos and confusion reigned supreme. Lawlessness became the order of the day.

Notes

1. Dr Upender Fotedar, *Daily Excelsior*, Jammu, April 06, 2000.
2. "In Hindu mythology, Nagas are serpant people born of the union of Mata Kadru and Rishi Kashyap" says Amish Tripathi, author of *The Secret of the Nagas* (part of Shiva Triology), in an interview to Sucheta Dasgupta, carried by *Pioneer* of September 18, 2011.
3. Manvantara, meaning 'the age of Manu'; it is an astronomical period of time measurement.
4. MM Munshi, *Kashmir Sentinel*, September 2007, p. 5.
5. Guryal is located 7 km to the east of Srinagar. *The Times of India;* September 19, 2011.
6. Michel Danino, "The Lost River: On the Trail of Sarasvati," *Pioneer*, May 31, 2010.
7. In ancient times, Saraswati River flowed in the north-western region of India (present day Pakistan).There are several references to this river in the *Rig Veda*, the oldest scripture of the human race arising from present-day India. Although the exact date of the origin of this river is in question, the majority of modern scholars agree that this river became dry around 1900 BCE.

8. *Rajatarangini* (lit. "River of Kings") is a historical chronicle of early India, written in Sanskrit verse by Kalhana (a Kashmiri Pandit) in 1148 CE. It covers the entire span of history in Kashmir from the earliest times to the date of its composition and is considered to be the best and most authentic work of its kind.
9. Bansi Pandit, *Explore Kashmiri Pandits,* (Dharma Publications, Delhi, 2008)
10. "Auriel Stein in his translation of verse 42 in Book IV of *Rajatarangini* says: "Subsequently, Queen Narendraprabha, wife of King Durlabhvardhana, bore the King a second son. Muktapida might be interpreted to mean 'he whom diadem is taken off."' Hence Kalhana, bearing in mind the greatness of the ruler (Muktapida) says 'his name ought to have been Avimukhtapida. However, the proper translation of Muktapida is, 'he whose diadem contains pearls' (See Bughler). Muktapida is an adjectival suffix to the name of the King Lalitaditya Muktapida. Mukta could also be the Prakritized version of Ou-Kong's (Chinese traveller) Moung-ti from which Kashmirian mutto is derived. Dr KN Pandita.

    Sir Marc Auriel Stein was a Hungarian Jew, born at Budapest on November 26, 1862. He was baptised as a Christian by his parents and later took British citizenship. He was an archaeologist, primarily known for his explorations and archaeological discoveries in Central Asia. He was knighted for his discovery of rare Buddhist manuscripts at Magao caves near Danhuang in China in 1907. Whenever he returned from his tiring expeditions to Central Asia, he made a tent in Gulmarg as his home, where he would stay all alone, except for his dog, called Dash. He was also a Professor at some Indian universities. He died in Kabul on October 26, 1943 and is buried there.
11. *Keys to Kashmir*, (Gandhi Memorial College, Lala Rookh Publications, Srinagar, 1957). p. 47.
12. Ibid.
13. *Begaar* is the name given to forced labour in which the ruler's/government agents would forcibly get men from villages to do forced labour without being paid for it. At times, "...It consists of requisitions for village produce, and is a form of purveyance on behalf of officials." The worst assignment for *Begaar* was to accompany troops to Gilgit, carrying their baggage, etc... "I have seen inhuman punishment dealt out to men who demurred to leaving their homes for two or three months with the prospect of death from cold and starvation. I have seen villagers maimed from frostbite or shriveled and paralysed from exposure to cold." Sir Walter Lawrence: *The Valley of Kashmir*: (Henry Fowde, London, 1895). The practice of *Begaar* was prevalent in mediaeval times and continued till as late as the end of 19th century.
14. Original *Tousi Maidan. Tousi* means a stream and *Maidan* is an open field. Here, a stream joined River Jhelum in an open field. It was, therefore called *Tousi Maidan,* which, with the passage of time, became Tosha Maidan. This magnificent and vast grassy highland of immense beauty lies to the north of Pir Panjal Range. For centuries, it has served as pristine pasture for the shepherds, who graze their flock of cattle here in the summer months.
15. *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, a chronicle of mediaeval Kashmir in Persian manuscript by an anonymous 17th century author: translated by Dr KN Pandita.

2

TRANSITION TO ISLAM

"Be chary of shedding blood, for blood does not sleep." "I have only reached my present position by conciliation." —(The above advice was given by Islam's greatest warrior, Saladin, to his son, Abu Mansur Al Zahir and to his Amirs on October 6, 1123).

Early Rulers

Some rulers of Kashmir encouraged Muslim influx into the valley to counter the supremacy of Brahmans. Some other Muslims arrived as traders from north-west India which had already embraced Islam; while others came from far off Persia, having been persecuted there by its rulers. One of these was Sayyid Sharfud'Din Abdur Rahman (d.1327 CE), later known as Bulbul Shah. He was a Syed of Turkistan and a Muslim missionary. Others included Shahmir, who came from Swat in 1313 along with his numerous relatives to seek employment. Suhadeva gave him a *jagir* (small territory) near Baramulla. Suhadeva also gifted a *jagir* to Lankar Chak, a Damara chieftain.[1] Similarly, Rinchen, a pseudo Buddhist, who hailed from Ladakh (some historians say from Tibet), migrated to Kashmir after his father, a local chieftain, had been killed in the power struggle with Baltis (ethnic inhabitants of Baltistan, now part of northern areas under Pakistan control, recently renamed Gilgit-Baltistan).He was

employed by Ramchandra and given a *jagir* at Lar, near Baramulla. In due course, all of them played a major role in establishing Islamic rule in Kashmir.

From 1286 to 1320 the feudal land-owning class, the Damars, had either ruled themselves or had been a big factor as part of the ruling class. Hindu dynasty of Loharas was decidedly in decline. It was during such unstable times that Dulcha invaded the valley. Chaos and depredations caused by Dulcha had left Kashmir in a precarious condition. Suhadev's cowardice and his effeminate compromises with those who posed great threat to Kashmir made it worse. Rather than confronting his enemies resolutely, he tried to buy peace by doling out lollipops to them.

1320–1323 CE: Rinchen

Taking advantage of such disorderly conditions in the valley and its spineless ruler, Rinchen struck. Unmindful of the good deed done to him by his benefactor, Rinchen attacked Ramchandra, who had succeeded Suhadeva, but was defeated and had to beat a hasty retreat. Ramchandra did not pursue the retreating army of Rinchen and hence did not deal a *coup de grace*. It was not for the first time that such magnanimity was to prove costly to Hindu kings. Realising well enough that he would not be able to capture Kashmir as long as Ramchandra was at its helm, Rinchen thought of a ruse to get rid of the latter. He invited Ramchandra to a feast at his camp. When the king arrived, Rinchen prevented his bodyguards from entering the venue, Ramchandra was thus left with only some of his courtiers inside the huge tent erected for the purpose. Once inside, the carefully and tactically placed troops of Rinchen pounced on Ramchandra and killed him and his courtiers.

Having got rid of the king, he descended into the valley and captured it. He now married Suhadeva's wife, Kota Rani. After some time he realised that in order to gain wider acceptability among the people and strengthen himself

politically, he needs to embrace their faith. He, therefore, decided to get initiated into Brahamanical fold. At this time Shaivism was the most practiced religion in the Valley. So he called Devaswami, the religious head of Shaivas to initiate him into Shaivism. Devaswami called a meeting of the prominent Brahmans who enjoyed religious authority and recognition at that time. But the revolting manner in which Rinchen had conducted himself all through weighed heavily against him. Having totally forgotten the good deed done to him by Suhadeva and Ramchandra, but for whose benevolence he would not even be living, the fleeing desperado had turned venomously against them. Devaswami and the prominent assembly refused to accept Rinchen as a Brahman.

Howsoever justifiable the verdict may have appeared at that time, politically, it proved to be a disaster. Jonaraja explains the action of Pandits thus, "By virtue of this gruesome blunder, Brahmans not only destroyed their own ascendancy but spelt ruin to their very existence."[2]

Feeling hurt and humiliated, Rinchen wanted to create a new faith which would treat all sects and factions uniformly, but Shahmir and Bulbul Shah manipulated his conversion to Islam, alongwith nearly 10,000 other Brahmans. He was now given a new Islamic name, Malik Sadarudin. As the first Muslim king of Kashmir, Rinchen now set on the expected course of avenging the humiliation heaped on him by the Brahmans who had refused his request to permit his conversion to Hinduism. With all the resources available to him as the king, Rinchen left no stone unturned to unleash a reign of terror on the Brahmans. In this, he was greatly helped and motivated by Bulbul Shah. No methods were considered too demeaning to achieve this goal of mass conversion. Brutal use of force saw thousands put to sword. Heavy taxation, forced inter-marriages and discriminatory laws were liberally used to break the will of the people. Thousands,

including Ramchandra's son Ravanchandra, were converted to Islam. It goes without saying that Bulbul Shah and Rinchen were instrumental in establishing Muslim rule in Kashmir. For the first time in its history, a Muslim ruling class came into being.

1339–1354 CE: Rinchan died in 1323, as a result of the head injury suffered by him during a minor rebellion launched by Udyanadev, brother of Suhadeva, who had returned to the Valley from Kishtwar, where he had fled when Dulcha had raided Kashmir. Rinchen left behind an infant son, Hyder Shah. Being a minor, the son could not be entrusted with the kingdom. Therefore, courtiers invited Udyanadev to accept the throne, which he did. To strengthen his position, he married Kota Rani. She thus kept the power in her own hands. She also appointed Bikshana Bhatta as prime minister while retaining Shahmir as the commander-in-chief. This way she ensured that all warring factions had a stake in the stability of the kingdom. However, the situation took a drastic turn when another Tartar, by the name of Achala, a Turk, invaded the Valley. Udyandev fled to Tibet. But Kota Rani and Shahmir joined hands and defeated Achala. Shahmir became a hero. His popularity among the people rose tremendously. He further strengthened his position by entering into matrimonial alliances with the nobles and influential gentry of Kashmir. His two sons, Jamshed and Allaudin were given important posts and he himself became the de facto ruler. However, on return from Tibet, Udyanandev was offered the throne again. He died in 1339 leaving behind a minor son who could not ascend to the throne. He thus became the last Hindu king of Kashmir.

Shahmir was watching the situation carefully. Kota Rani, in order to prevent mischief from Shahmir, kept her husband's death a secret for four days. After moving into the relative safety of Indrakot fort, she proclaimed herself a ruler. However, Shahmir decided to seize the opportunity and rallied his forces in the name of Islam. In

the ensuing struggle, Shahmir came out victorious and ruled by the name of Sultan Shamasudin (The Light of the Religion). Shahmir then asked Kota Rani to marry him. She made pretence of acceptance, but in the bridal chamber she stabbed herself and pointing to her intestines said "Here is my acceptance."[3] She thus bled to the death.

1339–1342 CE: Shahmir or Shamasudin was the second Muslim king of Kashmir. He became the architect of a long line of Muslim kings known as Sultans who ruled Kashmir for the next 200 years. With the establishment of Muslim rule in Kashmir, Islam became the court religion. Islamic missionaries from far off places, particularly Persia, started pouring into the valley. Royal patronage made their stay enjoyable and their proselytising easy and successful. All of them, however, were not driven only by their missionary zeal alone. Some actually sought refuge after escaping from the wrath of Taimur in Iran, but found conditions ripe for proselytising in their new abode. Among the prominent ones were Samnani brothers who were sent by Syed Ali Hamadani to explore the possibility of finding suitable refuge for Syeds from Persia and also if they could carry out their proselytising activity in the valley. Syeds were keen to escape their own country where they were under serious threat from Taimur for whom they had become a nuisance. Those who came included Syed Hussein Samnani, Syed Jalal-ud-Din, Syed Tajudin, Syed Masood and Syed Yusuf. It was one of the Samnani brothers who converted Salar Sanz, Nund Rishi's father to Islam. Subsequently, they were joined by the most prominent refugee, Syed Ali Hamadani, later known as Shah Hamadan, who had fled from Hamadan, a town in Persia with 700 of his ilk, to be followed by his son, Mir Muhhamad Hamadani, with another 300.

The story of Hamadani is very interesting. It is briefly recapitulated here. Taimur, like many monarchs of his time, was in the habit of moving around his capital during night in disguise. This he did to acquaint himself with the conditions of his subjects

and more importantly, get to know about their opinion of himself. One night he eavesdropped on the house of a poor man. The whole household appeared in a miserable condition, with children crying for want of food. The wife of the poor man was pleading with him to go out and beg, but the man refused as he felt it was below his dignity to do so. The king, overhearing their conversation felt sorry for them and quietly threw a few gold *mohurs* (gold coins) into the house. In the morning, when they woke up, they were overjoyed to see gold *mohurs* lying in their house. After many days they fed themselves well.

On seeing their changed situation, their neighbours, the Syeds, descendants of Hazrat Ali, the son-in-law of Prophet Mohammad, suspected them of theft and accordingly reported the matter to the local authorities. Being of high position they could have easily got the poor man punished, but to the latter's good luck, the king got to know of it. He summoned both parties in front of him. The poor man told the truth, which in any case was already known to the king. But the Syeds contradicted his story and declared on oath that the poor man had robbed them. The king, who was looking for an opportunity to confront the Syeds, became furious and ordered a horse of seven metals to be made. He made it red hot and asked the Syeds to ride it in order to prove that they were truly Syeds. According to Mohammedan tradition fire cannot harm the Syeds. In this manner those who obeyed him were burnt to death and those who did not, were killed by his soldiers. "But Syed Ali Hamadani managed to escape this ordeal and fled to Kashmir. It was through his and his son's instigation that Hindus of Kashmir were ruthlessly persecuted by Qutub-ud-Din and his successor, Sikandar the idol breaker," writes C E Tyndale Biscoe.[4]

1354–1373 CE: Shihab-ud-Din, grandson of Shahmir, has been described as a good general and an efficient administrator. In fact, his rule is considered the best in the history of Muslim Sultanate in Kashmir. Nevertheless, the rapid Islamisation of the

society and frantic proselytisation during his rule, created a sense of insecurity among the Brahmans. This resulted in a weak rebellion by Brahmans, which was crushed with a heavy hand. To break their will, almost all the temples in Srinagar were destroyed, and the Sun Temple at Bijbehara greatly damaged. The iconoclastic zeal with which the proselytisers went about wrecking havoc on the Brahmans and their places of worship, clearly establishes that the Sultan now considered it important to wipe out everything that did not have the imprint of Islam written on it. This he felt was a prerequisite for consolidation of his power. Despite facing such atrocities and terror, Brahmans continued to follow their religion. Nevertheless, Hindus from other castes converted to Islam either out of fear, or in order to gain royal favours, or out of social discrimination. Some historians contend that this was not sociologically possible.[5] Such conversions created animosity between the new converts and those who refused to be terrorised into changing their religion. The latter considered the converts as turncoats.

1373–1389 CE: Hindal, younger brother of Sihab-ud-Din, succeeded the latter and ruled under the title of Qutub-ud-Din. Syed Ali Hamadani came during this period and the Islamic practices were now enforced rather strictly.

1389–1413 CE: Sultan Sikandar

Sultan Sikandar is known to the history as *Butshikan*, meaning, iconoclast. He was a religious fanatic, the like of whom would put any bigot to shame. In order to achieve his aim of Islamising the complete valley, he took advantage of the animosity between Suha Bhatta, a Brahman, who had recently converted to Islam and renamed himself Saif-ud-Din, and other Brahmans who refused to convert, despite facing serious threat. Sikandar appointed him the prime minister. He also offered positions of pelf and power to new converts in order to consolidate his position. He now roped in Syed Ali Shah

Hamadani in his mission to convert the remaining Brahmans to Islam. Hamadani was rather too willing a tool in this mission. All three joined hands to Islamise the valley at the earliest, even if it involved letting loose a reign of terror, the like of which had not been witnessed even during Rinchen's time. The Muslim historian Hassan describes it as an orgy of cruelty, violence and terror let loose on the hapless Brahmans. All their temples in every city, town and village were vandalised, their magnificent idols, creation of unparalleled workmanship, were destroyed. The material collected from these destroyed temples was utilised to construct mosques and *khanqahs*. The one at Bijbehara still bears the name of Vijiveshvara khanqah as the same was built with the salvaged material of Vijiveshvara temple.

The imposing and magnificent temple at Martand received his special attention. All his efforts to demolish it, which went on for one year, failed. He, therefore, thought of an ingenious method of destroying it. He dug out stones from its base and burnt wood in the gaps thus created. Even though this hideous treatment failed to destroy the temple completely, it did inflict irreversible damage on the temple. The outer walls were completely destroyed and so were the gold gilded paintings. Its ruins even today fill a lay visitor with awe and wonderment. "Besides Martand, the other temples of note which were either completely demolished or damaged beyond repair included those of Chakradhara, Tripureshwara, Sureshwara, Awantipur and Paraspor. The material of these temples was used for embankments of the city and for laying the foundation of Jama Masjid."[6]

Sikandar's assault on Hindus and their temples is best summed up in 17th century Persian chronicle, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, which says that Sikandar "was constantly busy in annihilating the infidels and destroying most of their temples..."[7] In order to establish *Nizam-e-Mustaffa* and keep his patrons, the Syeds, in good humour, he banned all Hindu celebrations, including playing of music. He went to the extent of banning Hindus from putting on even their customary *tilak* (a mark worn on the forehead).Hindu religious texts

were collected and disposed off by either throwing these into Dal Lake or burying these under the earth.

Among other atrocities heaped on Hindus by Sikandar, were the royal edicts he issued, directing Hindus to either convert to Islam or be prepared to get killed. Many converted out of fear, thousands fled the valley and many preferred to poison or burn themselves to death. So many of them were killed that seven maunds (one maund equals approximately 37 kg) of the sacred thread they wore, was collected from their dead bodies and burnt to ashes. When Suha Bhatta learnt that the Brahmans were fleeing the valley, he had his border guards placed on the mountain passes, where many unfortunate escapees were caught and pushed down from high cliffs to meet a gory death. Such was the relentless campaign of vicious barbarity, unparalleled brutality and genocide perpetrated by Sikandar on Brahmans that even his accomplice in the process of proselytsing, Hamadani, was moved to appeal to Sikandar to put a stop to such gruesome methods and instead, levy taxes on them in the same way as his co-religionists did in the rest of India.

As a result, he levied a *jaziya* (tax levied on non-Muslims in an Islamic state) of two *pals* (about 94 gms) of silver on them. He also introduced an institution of *Sheikh-o-Islam*, to ensure that the injunctions of Islam are strictly followed. Many Brahmans preferred to go into exile rather than accept conversion, resulting in the *first mass exodus of Brahmans from the valley*. Ruins of many grand temples that dot the valley even today speak volumes about their magnificence in the bygone era and stand as mute testimony to the savagery with which Sikander destroyed such priceless work of art. According to Jonaraja, "...Just as fledgling pigeon is surrounded on all sides by crows, so was the king surrounded by *Yavannas*,[8] who became his retainers, his servants, his favourites and even his relatives." He further adds, "As the wind destroys the

trees and locusts destroy *shali* (paddy), the *yavanas* destroyed the usages... There was no city or town, no village or forest where any abode of gods escaped the destruction by Suha Bhatta."

The level of persecution against the Pandits was such that even the foremost Sufi saint of Kashmir, Nund Rishi[9] was forced to write, "We belong to the same parents; then why this difference? Let Hindus and Muslims (together) worship God alone. We came to this world like partners. We should have shared our joys and sorrows together."[10]

It is believed that by the time he died; only 11 Brahman families were left in the entire valley. This period is considered to be among the darkest chapters of Kashmir's history. It is widely accepted by historians that Sikandar allowed himself to be used by the fanatical Sayyeds. The degree of their commitment to fanaticism can be gauged from the fact that "Sayyed Ali Shah Hamadani handed over to Sultan Qutub-u'd-din in the fourteenth century a book named *Zakhirat-ul-Mulk*, containing 21 most humiliating conditions which a Muslim ruler must enforce upon his non-Muslim subjects, just to let them live."[11]

1413–1420 CE: Sultan Ali Shah, who succeeded his father Sikandar, on the latter's death continued with his father's policies with renewed vigour, while retaining Suha Bhatta, the convert, as his prime minister. He completed the work of destruction which his father had undertaken. Jonaraja captures the pathos of the times when he writes, "The Sultan crossed the limit by levying *jaziya* on the twice born. This evil-minded man forbade ceremonies and processions on the new moon. He became envious that the Brahmans, who had become fearless, would keep up their caste by going to foreign countries. He, therefore, posted guards along the roads and directed them not to allow anyone to proceed unless he possessed a passport. Thus, as the fishermen torment fish, so did the low born man torment the twice born in this country? The legendry

Brahmans burnt themselves along with their families by setting their homes on fire through fear of conversion and to save their *Dharma*. Some killed themselves by taking poison; some hanged themselves with rope and others by drowning themselves. Some even jumped off the precipice. The country was contaminated by hatred and the king's favourites could not prevent one in a thousand from committing suicide."[12]

The untold privations that Brahmans suffered during this period led to their *second exodus* as recorded by many historians, including renowned Muslim historians like, Hassan, Fauq and Nizam-ud-Din. The heat, lack of food, difficult terrain, and snake infested tracks ensured many died during their escape out of the valley. Payment of *jaziya* made life even more miserable for Brahmans who could barely manage to survive. In fact, most of them had to go from door to door to beg for food to ensure their survival. The Sultan and his cohorts, in order to ensure the destruction of their ancient learning, literature, education, art and culture, burnt many books and rare manuscripts. The Brahmans, despite paying *jaziya*, could neither apply *tilak* nor pray in their temples, nor even carry out any of their religious ceremonies.

1420–1470 CE: Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin

Sultan Zain-ul-Abadin, whose real name was Shahi Khan, ascended to the throne in 1420. Son of Sultan Sikandar, the iconoclast, and brother of Sultan Ali Shah, Zain-ul-Abidin had imbibed the qualities of tolerance, liberalism, secularism and broad mindedness due to various reasons; his sojourns to Central Asia where he had been exposed to a liberal form of Islam; influence of Lalleshwari and Nund Rishi (see chapter 6) and his own stepmother, Shoba Devi, a Hindu princess of Jammu.[13] A great connoisseur of arts and crafts, a scholar of varied literature and tolerant by nature, Zain-ul-Abidin's years spent during his youth in Central Asia, had introduced him to the fine arts and literature.

On ascending to the throne, he reversed the cruel and intolerant policies of his father and brother towards the Brahmans. He reached out to the Hindus who had fled the valley and called them back. For reconstructing the demolished temples of Hindus and Buddhists, he employed a renowned sculptor, Rupay Bhanda. The latter also supervised the construction of two new temples at Srinagar and Ishber. He encouraged art and literature and allowed full freedom of religion to Hindus. He encouraged them to join his administration. The Sultan put a stop to killing of cows and fishing from sacred ponds. He adopted personal laws for Hindus which were consistent with those laid down in *Shastras* (Hindu scriptures). He removed all restrictions on the performance of their religious ceremonies and celebration of their religious festivals. As a matter of fact, he himself attended a number of such celebrations.

Sultan Zain-ul-Abadin issued edicts through which the learned Brahmans were granted lands. He also opened royal kitchen for Hindu pilgrims visiting holy places. One such kitchen was constructed at Rainawari, near Srinagar, which even today is known as Jogi Lankar (Lankar being corrupted word for *Langar*, meaning kitchen). On auspicious days he would even entertain Brahmans and *Sadhus*.[14] State intervention ensured that Hindus got economic benefits in terms of employment, cash grants, restoration of their lands and estates. "As a gesture of goodwill he also banned cow slaughter and exempted all Hindus from cremation tax which his father had imposed."[15] The learned among them were bestowed with special honours at the king's court. For these reasons, Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin came to be called *Badshah* (great king).

He built the first permanent bridge at Srinagar, the present day *Zaina Kadal* or the fourth bridge. Badshah also established control over Ladakh, Baltistan, Naushera, Rajouri and Lohara. His primary concern always remained the welfare of his subjects, which had been neglected, nay, destroyed by his father. Some

of the administrative measures that he undertook benefited the whole population immensely. By creating a network of new canals (Kakpor, Uchdan, Karla, Avantipur, Shahkul, Lachhmankul, Mar, Lalkul, Safapur, Martand, Nor, Sonakul, etc.) and repairing those which were lying in disuse, he increased the food grain production three times. He encouraged the local silk industry and made it competitive in international market by importing designers from as far away as Samarkand, Herat, Khurasan, Gilan, Balkh and Bukhara.

The Sultan laid great emphasis on education. "The famous university around which intellectual activity of this period was organised was located at Naushar."[16] Some of the educational institutions that he established continued to function till the arrival of Mughals in the sixteenth century. "The other two colleges which provided education in Kashmir were located at Zainagiri and Seer near Achhabal in Anantnag district."[17]

The great Kashmiri historian, Jonaraja, was the court historian of Zain-ul-Abidin.

1470–1472 CE: Hyder Shah, the prodigal son of Zain-ul-Abidin, ascended the throne on the death of his father. With that ended the Brahman's newly acquired brief respite. He was an unlettered man given to frequent bouts of drinking and was under the wicked influence of Purni (a barber, who had converted to Islam). Purni led and organised religious fanatics and other elements which had been kept at bay by Zain-ul-Abidin. The king, with the help of Purni and his malcontents brought back the old cruel ways through which they wrecked havoc on the Hindus again. The repression was so abominable that the tolerant Brahmans lost their patience and rose in rebellion. They destroyed a few mosques that had been built with the material collected from the temples demolished by Sikandar. However, the short-lived rebellion was put down with a heavy hand,

to be followed by most cruel reprisals. Desecration, destruction, loot and plunder of temples was resorted to with renewed vigour. Many had their noses and arms cut; many were mercilessly put to sword; many preferred to drown themselves in Vitasta (now River Jhelum) to escape from torture.[18]

1476–1487 CE: This period witnessed even greater genocide under the rule of Hassan Khan, who ruled only in name, with the actual Power resting with Shamas Chak, Shringar Raina and Musa Raina (originally Soma Chandra, a Hindu, converted to Shia sect of Islam). The Hindus were subjected to such brutality that many of them gave up their religion screaming *Na Bhattoham* (I am not a Hindu). To avoid persecution, many went into seclusion and avoided contact with outsiders, as much as possible.

1477–1517 CE: The arrival of Mir Shamasuddin Araqi, a Shia missionary and an emissary of the King of Herat, during the reign of Hassan Khan, was the most notable feature of this period. He visited Kashmir twice (1477 and 1496) and stayed for a total period of 20 years. This period coincided with the founding of the *Noorbakshiya* order (Shia Sect) in Kashmir by Sayyed Noorbaksh. The sect had attracted numerous followers, though the founder himself had fallen foul of the *Mullahs,* as he found them corrupt and depraved. He often entered into debates with them. Through such debates, he succeeded in showing the *Ulema* (Muslim legal scholars) in poor light, for what he called their idolatrous ways, which he denounced. He thus created conducive atmosphere to "raise high the banner of Islam, demolish the customs and traditions of idol worshippers and eradicate all symptoms of infidelity and ignorance from the misguided people of this land," writes Tej N Dhar.[19] Being a personal acquaintance of Sayyed Noorbaksh and having been deeply influenced by his thought, Araqi decided to use his sword against the infidels. His mindset can be gauged from his criticism of Sultan

Zain-ul-Abidin, whom he blamed for having led people towards infidelity. At the same time, he extolled the ways of Sultan Sikander and the two Hamadanis.

On his second visit, he became a close confidant of Malik Musa Raina, a powerful Damara chief. Mohammad Shah, the reigning king, granted many favours to Araqi. Such favours emboldened him to become even more aggressive in his behaviour towards the Hindus and others who did not follow his dictat. As a result, he fell out with the Governor Mian Muhammad Baihaqi, who sent him to Skardu, a town in Baltistan. However, as luck would have it, Fateh Shah, with the support of Musa Raina, replaced the king soon thereafter. Musa Raina, consequently, achieved tremendous clout. Araqi was now called back.

On his return, he once again inflicted atrocities on the Hindus with renewed zeal and ruthlessness. With the help of Musa Raina, he ensured that 2,000 Brahmans were brought to his palace every day, where they were administered *Kalima* (confirming conversion to Islam) after removing their sacred thread. The ritual was then followed by circumcising them and finally feeding them with beef. Precious Hindu religious scriptures, many dating back to seventh century CE, were destroyed. Additionally, 18 prominent ancient temples were destroyed, properties confiscated and women abused. In the unending genocide over 800 Hindu leaders were put to sword during *Ashura.*[20] This resulted in *Third mass exodus* of Hindus from the valley.

Sunnis fared no better, though not on the same scale, with many of them being converted to Shiaism by the most brutal methods. According to *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, "All traces of infidelity and idol worship were replaced by Islamic symbols and the infidels and holy thread wearers of Kashmir were converted to Islam."[21] Araqi then turned his attention to Kargil, where Buddhists became the victims

of his conversion zeal in the similar manner. This is why Kargil even today is a predominantly a Shia district, the only such district in the whole state of Jammu and Kashmir. The reign of terror let loose by Araqi was such that Fateh Shah, a Sunni Muslim, who ruled between 1510 and 1517, was rendered totally ineffective. Araqi built a Khanqah in Zadibal, which to this day, retains its Shia concentration in the valley. "After completing the task of destroying what he called the traces of infidelity and urging people to follow the ways of faith, Araqi left Kashmir for good."[22]

1519 CE: The Harmukh Tragedy

As if the manmade disasters were not enough, nature intervened to quench its own thirst with the blood of Brahmans. Approximately 10,000 Kashmiri Brahmans died during the pilgrimage to Harmukh Ganga, where they had gone to immerse the ashes of 800 of their community members who had been killed during Ashura the previous year. Poet-historian, Shuka, records the tragedy thus, "Ganga was oppressed with hunger as it was after a long time that it devoured bones: she surely devoured the men also who carried those bones."[23] Ironically, it was after a gap of many years that people had been allowed to proceed on pilgrimage to Lake of Harmukh, that ended in this great tragedy.

1540–1551 CE: Mirza Hyder Dhughlat

The chaotic and unsettled conditions left behind by Araqi in Kashmir were such that Mirza Hyder Dhughlat, a Mughal general and a relative of Humayun arrived with barely 400 troops and met with practically no resistance. He was in Humayun's service when the latter was defeated and forced into retreat by Sher Shah Suri at Kannauj in 1540. Mirza Hyder Dhughlat established himself in Kashmir and ruled in the name of Humayun.

1553–1586 CE: Chak Rule

After the death of Mirza Hyder, local chieftains scrambled for power. In the ensuing melee Chaks gained an upper hand. Qazi Chak, the founder of Chak rule in Kashmir, was a Shia who carried on the merciless religious persecution of Hindus and succeeded in converting many of them to Shia faith. In order to hurt the religious sentiments of Brahmans and satisfy his vain ego, he ordered the killing of 1,000 cows everyday. Brahmans were made the object of laughter and ridicule by being publicly abused and humiliated. Yaqub Chak, the last Chak ruler, had even more sinister designs on them, but could not implement these as Kashmir was annexed by Mughals before he could put his plans into practice.

Notes

1. Fuedal chieftains who seized power in Kashmir briefly, between 1286 and 1301 CE.
2. "Jonaraja was a 15th century Kashmiri historian, Sanskrit poet and a court historian of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin, who supplemented Kalahana's *Rajatarangani* to cover post-Kalahana era from 12th to 14th century."
3. Jagmohan, *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*, (New Delhi, Allied Publishers. Third Ed, 1993) p. 50.
4. CE Tyndale Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, p. 71. CE Tyndale Biscoe was a missionary and an educationist who arrived in India in 1890. He stayed in Kashmir for 30 years and is considered to be a pioneer in the spread of modern education in Kashmir. One of the earliest schools in the heart of Srinagar bears his name.
5. Hindus in Kashmir did not appear to have taken the caste-system seriously and the system neither had any stranglehold on its social hierarchy nor did it play an important role in its division into various classes. As the adage goes, "Caste in Kashmir was not cast in stone". It was quite in contrast with what was visible in the Hindu society elsewhere. Therefore, some historians contend that this was not socially possible.
6. Hasan, *History of Kashmir*. Hasan, whose actual name was Pir Ghulam Hasan Khuihami (Khuihami, because he belonged to Khuihom — Khuihom is a combination of Sanskrit words, Khrish+Ashrama, which is present-day Bandipore). Hasan wrote *Tarikh-i-Kashmir* in Farsi in three volumes in circa 1889. After being edited by Moulvi Ibrahim of Khanyar, Srinagar, it was published by Jammu and Kashmir Cultural Academy in Farsi in three volumes. The book, whose Volume II is political history and is considered most authentic, has not been translated into Urdu or English.

   In his introduction to the book, Hasan mentions that his grandfather's name was Ganesh Kaul. Hasan will certainly rate as the only unbiased Muslim historian of Kashmir. He had met and exchanged notes with Auriel Stein, the celebrated translator of Kalhana's

Rajatarangini. Hasan is the only historian who has tried to trace the missing kings in Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*. He claimed that he had laid his hands on a Persian manuscript, a translation of the original Sanskrit or Sharada, of *Rajtarangini*, done during the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin around 1350 CE.

7. HM Chadurah, *Tarkh-i-Kashmir*, translated by Razia Bano, (Delhi, 1991), p. 55.
8. The term refers to Muslims.
9. Nund Rishi or Sheikh Nur-Ud-din (name given to him by Mir Mohammad Hamadani), was born at Kaimu, near Bijbehara in 1377. A younger contemporary of Lalleshwari, his family had migrated from Kishtwar to Kashmir earlier. His father SalarSanz, had been converted to Islam by Sufi saint, Yasman Rishi. Even at a young age, Nund Rishi's saintly attributes were quite visible. Finally, he gave up the world and lived in a cave for 12 years. His highly meaningful utterances, full of spiritual insight, spread far and wide and attracted great number of followers. These sayings have been preserved in two volumes, namely Rishi NamaandNurNama.

   Nund Rishi exercised and continues to exercise enormous influence on the People of Kashmir. His funeral after his death at a ripe age was attended by the King, Zain-ul-Abidin, himself. His grave at Tsrar-e-Sharief is, perhaps, the most frequented pilgrimage centre in Kashmir.
10. Sultan Shaheen: Kashmiriyat, "Gift of Rishi-Sufi order," Speaking Tree, *Times of India*, April 19, 2007.
11. Dr Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani, *Koshur Samachar*, April 2010.
12. Dr Satish Ganjoo, *'Satanic Holocaust of Kashmiri Pandits;* downloaded from KP Network @yahoogroups.com, on March 31, 2006.
13. Jonaraja, *Rajtarangini*, (see chapter 6). English translation by JC Dutt, 1998. Vol III, St. 44.
14. Indian holy man, sage, or ascetic revered by Hindus for their renunciation and for being concerned with higher goals of life.
15. Dr Rattan Lal Hangloo, Department of History, University of Hyderabad, *Kashmir under Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin, "Badsha."*
16. Jonaraja; *Rajtarangini* and English Translation by JC Dutt 1998. Vol III, St. 722–726, 770.
17. GMD Sufi: *Kashir, Being a History of Kashmir,* Vol. I & II (Lahore, The University of Punjab, 1948), p. 348.
18. Dr Satish Ganjoo, n. 11.
19. Tej N Dhar, *Koshur Samachar*, March 2010, p. 40.
20. Mourning period observed by Shia Muslims, commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Hussein at Karbala.
21. *Baharistan-i-Shahi*: an account of Mediaeval history of Kashmir by an anonymous author. Translated into English by Dr KN Pandita.
22. Tej N Dhar, n. 18.
23. Shuka was a historian, who alongwith Jonaraja and Shrivara, updated *Rajtarangini* (see chapter 6).

3

MUGHAL AND AFGHAN PERIOD

"Few regions in the world could have had worse luck than Kashmir in the matter of Government." —*Vincent and Smith*

1586–1752 CE: Mughal Period

The conditions continued to deteriorate during the Chak rule in the valley. As a result, some Kashmiri nobles decided to invite the Mughal king, Akbar to annex Kashmir in 1586.

Taking a leaf out of Zain-ul-Abidin's rule, Akbar exercised immense religious tolerance in dealing with Kashmiri Pandits. He considered them as a respectable class of people, who were true believers of God. They were described as lovers of nature, given to planting fruit trees and being a source of inspiration to others. Akbar respected their customs and traditions and in fact, when in Kashmir, himself participated in their annual festival, the birthday of Vitasta (present day Jhelum), which falls on 13th day of *Bhadrapada* (August-September), He also ordered the illumination of the whole city on this occasion. The King took immediate steps to redress the grievances of Kashmiri Pandits by abolishing *jaziya* imposed on them, and issued appropriate edicts to rehabilitate them. He even went to the extent of creating rent free villages for Hindus. He appointed one of them, Adhitya Pandit, to put into practice the allocation of these villages and their lands.

As Shuka, the historian records, "the King announced that he would, without delay, reward those who would respect the Pandits and that he would demolish the houses of those who would demand annual tribute from them (Pandits)."[1] This order was necessitated by the fact that Pandits could carry out their religious practices only after paying a tribute to the rulers at that time. "They (Pandits) identified themselves with Mughal manners and modes of administration. Their proficiency in Persian, the court language, proved a great asset. The Pandits became the backbone of the structure of governance at the middle level. Their prestige in society was also enhanced by Emperor Akbar's visit to the Martand Temple and offering a cow, with garlands of gold and jewels, as a gift. From insignificant number of 11 families, their number also increased."[2] According to Abu Fazal's *Ain-e-Akbari*, Kashmiri Pandit population in the valley during Emperor Akbar's rule was 2,000 and the Emperor held them in high esteem for their erudition, intelligence and learning.

Akbar built a massive wall around the hill of Hari Parbat and created a new city of Nagar Nagar[3] near it. Though Akbar did visit Kashmir, it was largely ruled through his governor, called *Subedar*.

Akbar's rule is also remembered for the so called romance of Habba Khatoon with young Yousuf Shah Chak, inspired more by colourful imagination than based on hard historical facts. Habba Khatoon was a Kashmiri poetess born in 1553. She was known for her romantic songs in the *vatsan*[4] style. These songs, having come down through oral tradition, have been preserved by folk singers in their repertoire. Because of this reason, these songs can hardly be distinguished from folk songs.

Born as Zoon to her parents, Habba Khatoon was extremely beautiful with a very sonorous voice. However, as her biography is mostly based on legends, very little is known about her real life. Till

nineteenth and twentieth century, no written account about her life appeared. Hassan, Khoihami, Birbal Kachru and Mohammad Din Fouq were among the first to give some details about her life.

It is possible that having heard about her reputation as a great beauty and singer, courtiers of the Chak ruler may have brought her to his court, as was the custom, where he had a fling with her, as the Persian historians say, "bestowed on her the favour of sharing his bed." Yusuf Shah was a profligate, given to sensuous pleasures, and he may even have appointed her as a singer at his court. To bestow the title of Queen on Habba Khatoon would be rather far-fetched.

Akbar finally arrested Yusuf Shah Chak for his dilly-dallying about an agreement that both were honour bound to implement and banished him to Bihar, where he died and lies buried. With that Habba Khatoon's affair with him came to an end. Habba Khatoon died in 1605.

Despite his positive contribution to Kashmir, Akbar did not seem too impressed by Kashmiris. At one point he remarked, "You Kashmiris have stomachs to eat but not to fight." He further elaborated, "Men? Faint-hearts, not lion hearts."[5]

Akbar was followed by Jahangir, who visited the valley 13 times, accompanied by a retinue of courtiers, princes, generals and other dignitaries of the kingdom. Jahangir seemed to have been captivated by the scenic beauty of the valley. He built famous Nishat and Shalimar gardens on the outskirts of Srinagar and similar such gardens at Achhabal and Verinag in south Kashmir. In fact, Jahangir died on the way back from Kashmir. (see chapter 5)

1627–58 CE: Shahjahan: Next in line of Mughal succession was Shahjahan. He too continued his love affair with the valley, visiting it a number of times. He added Chashmashahi garden at the foothills of Zabarvan Hills close to the gardens built by Jahangir. But both

Jahangir and Shahjahan treated Kashmiri Pandits and their religious places with contempt. Describing Shahjahan's Kashmir summer palace, French historian and traveller, Francoi Bernier writes, "The doors and pillars were found in some of the idol temples demolished by Shah-Jehan and it is impossible to estimate their value."[6]

1658–1707 CE: Some respite that Pandits had gained came to a sudden end with the ascension of Aurengzeb to the Mughal throne. He was a religious bigot who sent his governors to the valley with the specific instructions to convert Pandits to Islam. Therefore, religious fanaticism and narrow mindedness were the two principle characteristics of his governors. Iftikar Khan, Muzzafar Khan, Nissar Khan and Ibrahim Khan who ruled Kashmir as Mughal governors unleashed a reign of terror on Kashmiri Pandits, resulting in their *fourth exodus.* It is possible that this time all Pandits would have been killed or converted, but for the audacious sacrifice of Guru Teg Bahadur, the Ninth Sikh Guru.

1720 CE: It was now the turn of Mullah Abdul Nabi, also called Muhat Khan, a non-resident Kashmiri Muslim, to be appointed as Sheikh-ul-Islam (superior authority concerning issues of Islam). He ordered the deputy governor, Mir Ahmed Khan to begin persecution of *kafirs* (infidels, referring to Hindus). The Mullah issued the following six specific commandments for this purpose:

1. No Hindu should ride a horse, nor should he wear shoes.
2. They should not wear *Jama* (Mughal costume).
3. Should not move out with their arms covered.
4. They shall not visit any garden.
5. Are not permitted to have a *tilak* mark on their foreheads.
6. Their children should not be educated.

But Ahmed Khan refused to execute the mischievous decree. The

Mullah then incited his followers against the Pandits. He established his seat in a Mosque, assumed the duties of the administrator under the title Dindar Khan and let loose a reign of terror. Hundreds of Pandits were killed and maimed, their properties looted and their honour trampled under the relentless and unmerciful hordes let loose by the Mullah. This resulted in their *fifth exodus*. Those who were left behind had no respite either. They had to undergo most inhuman torture at the hands of the cruel and barbarous fanatics. The Mullah, however, was soon assassinated by his rivals. His son, Shariefuddin, now succeeded him as the Sheikh-ul-Islam. He improved upon his father's cruel methods and devised more heinous ways to torment the Pandits. Their cup of misery was now overflowing.

1746–47 CE: Nature too played its part in inflicting further misery on the hapless people of the valley. Devastating floods were followed by a horrible famine in which nearly 75 per cent of the population is believed to have perished.

Time, therefore, was ripe for further subjugation of the valley by those who wielded a longer, stronger and sharper sword than the disintegrating Mughals.

1753–1819 CE: Afghan Rule

Ahmad Shah Abdali brought Afghan rule to Kashmir. He sent forces under Abdullah Khan Ishqe Aqasi who easily brought the valley under his brutal control. Though Aqasi himself ruled only for five months, he left behind a trail of terror and destruction. He handed over the charge of Kashmir to Abdullah Khan Kabuli, with Sukhjivan Mal, a Hindu Khatri adventurer, as his chief advisor. A local noble, Abdul Hassan Bandey, hatched a conspiracy with Sukhjivan Mal to rid Kashmir of cruel Afghan rule. He persuaded Sukhjivan to do away with Kabuli. This he did and Sukhjivan declared independence with Bandey as his chief minister. But Abdali would not give up. He

immediately sent Khwaja Kijah to regain control of Kashmir from Sukhjivan. However, he was defeated. Aqasi now decided to take matters in his own hand and arrived personally to achieve what the Khwaja could not. But he too was defeated. In a bid to gain time and strengthen his position, Abdali now declared allegiance to the crumbling but still powerful Mughal Empire. At the same time, he resorted to a well-conceived strategy. Through his agent, Mir Muqim Kanth, he poisoned the relationship between Bandey and Sukhjiwan. Taking advantage of the situation, Abdali sent a force in 1762 under the command of Nurrudin Khan Bamzai. A major part of Sukhjivan's force deserted him. He was captured, blinded, tortured and sent to Abdali at Lahore, where he was mercilessly killed under the feet of an elephant.

According to WR Lawrence[7], Afghan rule in Kashmir was a period of brutal tyranny which continued during the rule of Lal Khan Khattak (1762 CE) and Faqirullah. Amir Khan who replaced the latter did no better. He was Shia, and as cruel as some of the earlier Shias that Kashmir had known. His only worthwhile contribution to Kashmir was the construction of Amira Kadal, bridge over river Jhelum. Assad Khan, who arrived in 1784 CE, too continued with the policy of murder and plunder. He declared himself independent, taking advantage of the considerably weakened central authority in India. Ingenious methods were adopted to humiliate the Pandits. For example an earthen pitcher filled with ordure would be placed on the head of a Pandit and onlookers goaded to throw stones on the pitcher till it broke and the unfortunate Pandit became drenched with filth. He confiscated all Hindu scriptures and had a bund constructed with these along a tributary of Jhelum called *Tschunth Kol*, at present known as Suth.

When the Afghans got tired of killing Hindus with sword, they devised other methods. Hindus were tied up in grass sacks in pairs,

and drowned in the Dal Lake. Mir Hazar, the Afghan governor, then replaced these hay sacks with leather sacks, to make the ordeal of Hindus even more horrifying. The place in the valley, where these horrendous acts were carried out, is still called *Bhatta Mazar*, (graveyard of Pandits). To trample upon their dignity and humiliate them further, any Muslim could jump on the back of a Pandit and take a ride. This practice was called "*Khos.*" Pandits were forbidden to put on shoes or tie turbans or use *tilak* mark on their foreheads. Many parents were compelled to shave off the heads of their daughters or even cutting off their nose and ears to prevent them from becoming the target of Afghan lust. Thousands of victimised Hindus were killed or converted to Islam. Those who survived were forced to flee resulting in the *sixth exodus*. Many covered the long distance on foot suffering untold miseries enroute.

Due to their education and integrity, Afghans had found it useful to appoint Pandits as *kardars*, who were responsible for collecting 'agricultural tax' from the peasants on behalf of the governor. A *kardar* would collect half the produce as agricultural tax, pay the Governor his dues and retain the rest. When produce was abundant, the *kardar* stood to gain a lot. But when crops failed, the *kardar* had to face the brunt of the governor's wrath. Such a state of affairs resulted due to the distant and remote location of the king, who ruled from Kabul and hence could not keep a close watch on Kashmir. Consequently, the governor was largely left to his own whims and fancies, allowing him to become autocratic and ruling with a heavy hand. When this happened, the *kardars* had to face immense cruelties. As a consequence, many of them migrated out of the valley.

Twenty-eight Afghan governors ruled Kashmir during the 67 years of their despotic occupation. It can safely be said that the corner-stone of Afghan rule in Kashmir was terror and the only

legacy they left behind was their resort to brutality and savage torture. As one historian said, "They thought no more of cutting off heads than of plucking a flower." Most historians agree that it was the darkest period in the history of Kashmir even by its own standards of darkness which it had seen in the past. Though almost all sections of people suffered at the Afghan hands, the main victims of their brutal rule were the Shias, Hindus and Bombas.[8]

In the meanwhile, in a blow to Afghan power, young Ranjit Singh, whom the Afghan king, Shah Zaman, had appointed as the governor of Punjab, declared independence in 1801. Soon thereafter, Maharaja Ranjit Singh became a powerful regional king.

An interesting episode which had far-reaching consequences for Afghan rule in Kashmir and clearly establishes their unprincipled governance, cunning, avarice and greed, which formed the bedrock of their rule, is narrated here.

Three distinguished Pandits, namely Sukhram Safaya, Mirza Pandit and Birbal Dhar had been appointed by Afghan governor, Azim Khan as revenue collectors. Due to crop failure, Birbal Dhar could not collect the expected revenue. The governor insisted that Birbal would have to pay one lac rupees (₹100,000) to make good the loss. In the coming few days, Birbal, along with many other Pandits, was threatened and browbeaten. Expecting brutal reprisal in keeping with Afghan track record, particularly in the existing intolerable conditions, some distinguished Pandits resolved to turn to the rising power of Sikh empire, headed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, to save Kashmir from further disaster. Accordingly, Birbal Dhar and his minor son, Raja Kak Dhar left for Lahore in disguise, with a petition signed by prominent Pandits, inviting him to take over the valley. However, the Afghan governor got wind of it. He unleashed a reign of terror and had many distinguished Pandits killed, their properties confiscated and *jaziya* imposed on them.

He sent his forces to look for Birbal Dhar but to no avail. He, therefore, turned his attention to the latter's wife and his daughter-in-law, who had taken shelter in the house of a trustworthy Muslim, Qadus Gojwari, on the advice of another distinguished and trustworthy Kashmiri Pandit, Vasakak Harkarabashi. The governor tasked Vasakak to look for the two unfortunate women. However, even though Vasakak knew their location, he did not disclose it. All stratagems were tried to make him spill the beans, but he did not budge. A fine of rupees 1000 per day was imposed on him. Yet he maintained his silence. He was subjected to inhuman torture and untold atrocities, but it did not break his resolve. Finally, his abdomen was ripped open and he was brutally murdered. Despite this sacrifice, Azim Khan succeeded in digging out the information about the secret hiding place of these unfortunate women from Birbal Dhar's son-in-law, Tilak Chand Munshi, who had learnt about the whereabouts of his mother-in-law and his sister in law from his wife. The older woman committed suicide by swallowing a piece of diamond and the younger one was violently converted to Islam and handed over to an Afghan noble who took her to Kabul.

Finally, came the turn of Vasakak Harkarabashi. His abdomen was ripped open and his dead body trampled upon. To quench his thirst for retribution, Azim Khan continued with the terror that he had let loose on the innocent and peaceful Pandits. In his paranoia he rounded up all those whom he suspected of being in league with Birbal Dhar. He sent them all to a concentration camp established near Nishat garden, where numerous atrocities were committed on them. The kind of torture inflicted on them knew no bounds. Azim Khan left Kashmir in 1816 with 20 million rupees, leaving the Valley in the care of his younger brother, Jabbar Khan, who perhaps, was the cruelest of all Afghan governors.

As if this was not enough, between 1812 and 1816, many unsuccessful attempts were made by Shahmirs and Chaks to annex

Kashmir. This resulted in continued strife which tore the fabric of Kashmiri society and left deep scars on it.

Birbal Dhar, in the meanwhile, succeeded in convincing Maharaja Ranjit Singh to annex Kashmir and bring to an end the cruel rule of the Afghans. He promised to compensate the Maharaja if the Sikhs were unable to take Kashmir. As a guarantee, he left behind his son Raja Kak Dhar with the king. However, the guarantee remained un-cashed as the Sikh forces finally entered the valley under Mirsa Dewan Chand on July 15, 1819, and annexed the Valley. Jabbar Khan's defeat brought to an end the inglorious rule of Afghans.

The magnanimity of Kashmiri Pandits and their regard for religious tolerance can be gauged from some incidents that took place immediately after the Sikhs annexed the Valley. In those troubled times there appeared no guarantee for the safe treatment of Afghan women, particularly when seen in the background of the treatment meted out to Pandit women in general and to the wife and daughter of Birbal Dhar in particular. However, Afghan womenfolk were saved only because of the intervention of an illustrious Pandit, Sahajram. On his advice they were sent to Kabul, escorted by Sahajram himself. That was how a Kashmiri Pandit saved the honour of Afghan women, when their own women had been treated so shabbily.

Another incident concerns the impending demolition of the mosque of Shah Hamadan. Some Sikhs were determined to knock down this mosque. When Muslims learnt of it, they sent a delegation under Sayyed Hassan Shah Khanyari to Birbal Dhar to plead with him to use his influence with the Sikhs to dissuade them from going ahead with the destruction of this mosque. Birbal Dhar moved swiftly in the matter and convinced the Sikhs that it was not the right thing to do and thus saved it from being destroyed. Historian, GMD Sufi, acknowledges it to the lasting credit of the true character and nobility of the distinguished Kashmiri Pandit.

Subsequently, Diwan Moti Ram was appointed by the Sikhs as their first governor, with Birbal Dhar as his *Peshkar* (Chief Local Advisor).

Notes

1. Shuka: *Rajtarangini.*
2. Jagmohan, *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir.* (Allied Publishers. Third Edition, 1993), p. 499.
3. "Abul Fazl, Akbar's courtier and historian has mentioned Nagar Nagar in *Ain-e-Akbari* as a new habitat close to what is known as Badam Waer, in the northern foothill of Sharika Parvata (Hari Parbat). Very recently, a trend has emerged in Kashmir Valley among the so-called intellectuals and historians, to suppress the name Srinagar and use Nagar Nagar instead. Even in a formal public speech Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah said a township would be raised in Nagar Nagar." Dr KN Pandita.
4. According to Dr Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani, "*Vatsan* is a form of short lyric peculiar to Kashmiri, and Habba Khatoon is said to have composed some very melodious *vatsans* with love, longing and pangs of separation as their theme."
5. Maud Diver, *Royal India*: (Appleton Country Company, New York, 1942), p. 274.
6. Francoi Bernier (1625–1688) was a French physician and a traveller. He was a personal physician of Mughal Emperor Aurengzeb, who visited Kashmir in 1665. His *Travels in India* contains a series of letters about his journey to Kashmir in Aurangzeb's suite (edited by Archibald Constable in 1891).Second edition was revised by Vincent Smith: (Oxford University Press, London, 1914).
7. Sir Walter Lawrence was an able and objective scholar who visited Kashmir in late 19th century and wrote about Kashmir and its people.
8. Bombas were a turbulent and volatile people who mainly lived in the Jhelum gorge, below Baramulla.

4

SIKH AND DOGRA RULE

"History is indeed a collection of crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind. But what history and experience teach is this; that peoples and governments have never learned from history or acted on principles deduced from it."

—George Wilhelm Fredrick Hegel

1819–1846 CE: Sikh Rule

(See Appendix 'A'; p. 629)

By the time Sikhs arrived in Kashmir, bulk of the population had embraced Islam (some estimates put the figure at nine tenths of the total population). During their rule of the Valley for 27 years, the Sikhs rescued the handful of Pandits from their oppressors. Initially, they were rather harsh towards the general population of Kashmir, whom they "did not consider anything more worthy than cattle."[1] However, Pandits got a long awaited respite, which served as a balm on their festering wounds. Some prominent places were restored to them. In the process; they partly regained a bit of their lost prestige and dignity. Banning of cow slaughter and renovation of temples sent a strong message to the fanatical elements which had tormented the Pandits.

In the meantime, natural calamities continued to keep their date with Kashmir. Sikh rule too witnessed its share of these calamities

in the form of heavy and premature snowfall that destroyed almost entire crop, giving rise to famine and outbreak of cholera. To add to the people's woes, it was now the turn of deadly plague to break out. This caused enormous loss of life, forcing large sections of people to migrate to the plains of India in search of livelihood. During this period, Kashmir valley presented a picture of devastation; widespread starvation and abject poverty. Moorcroft, an English explorer, who visited the Valley in 1835, presents a grim picture of the conditions prevailing at that time. He mentions that only one sixth of the cultivable land was under crop, multitudes of people lacked the means of sustenance; villages had been deserted by most of the inhabitants and those who had been left behind, eked out a miserable living, with most of them resorting to begging as a means to survival. "Rural folk on the whole were half naked and miserably emaciated and presented a ghastly picture of poverty and starvation."[2] Historical records make it abundantly clear that Sikh rulers were too preoccupied with the happenings in the Punjab and the goings-on at Lahore, to be distracted by the happenings in Kashmir, that lay on the fringes of their empire. Historical records suggest that Sikh rulers were harsh on Muslims. "The penalty imposed on a Sikh for slaying a Muslim was only twenty rupees."[3]

Maharaja Ranjit Singh died in 1839, without ever having visited Kashmir, despite his strong desire to do so.

1846–1947 CE: Dogra Rule

For centuries, Jammu region consisted of a number of smaller principalities, constantly at war with each other. People living in one such hilly principality, located in the south-east, were known as *Dogras*. Compared to the indolent Kashmiris, Dogras displayed extraordinary fighting qualities. Raja Ranjit Deo, whose family had ruled Jammu region from 1742 to 1780, had brought 22 small Dogra chieftains under his control after the collapse of Mughal empire. The

Dogra dynasty itself ended when it got irresistibly sucked into the rising Sikh power under Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The re-emergence of Dogra rule in the Jammu region and its subsequent extension to Kashmir is intimately connected to the genius and cunning of Gulab Singh, who traced his ancestry to the family of Raja Ranjit Deo. An intrepid Rajput, he owed his meteoric rise to his gifted foresight and determination. Gulab Singh was a rare combination of a soldier and a statesman, who at an early age of 16 years distinguished himself in the battle of Gumat, during an attack on Jammu in 1808, by Sikh forces. Thereafter, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, taking note of his potential as a courageous fighter, took him under his wing. He also employed his brothers, Dyan Singh and Suchet Singh. In 1819, Gulab Singh was granted a number of estates, including Jammu by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He was also granted the title of Raja that enabled him to raise his own force. Gulab Singh made the best use of this generosity by bringing Reasi, Kishtwar, Rajouri, Chenani, and other smaller areas under his control by using all means, fair and foul. He further extended his territories in 1834, when his most brilliant soldier, General Zorawar Singh, brought Ladakh province into his dominion. At that time Ladakh was an independent kingdom under the suzerainty of grand Lamas of Tibet. Later in 1840, he captured Gilgit, Baltistan and Zanskar regions.

Formation of Jammu and Kashmir State

After the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839, the Sikh empire did not have a visionary and strong ruler to hold the kingdom together. This resulted in the weakening of the Sikh empire at a crucial stage when British advance towards the north-west inevitably brought it in direct confrontation with the Sikh empire. On September 15, 1843, due to court intrigues and a scramble for power, the powerful and highly influential Dogra *Wazir* Dhyan

Singh was brutally murdered. Dogras suffered steep decline in their prestige and influence. Efforts were also made to cut Gulab Singh to size. But he proved too shrewd for his opponents and turned this great adversity into an opportunity. This situation was being closely watched by the British.

The Dogras, Sikhs and the British, the three protagonists of this unfolding drama, had their own objectives. Their peculiar strengths and weaknesses had a deep impact on the interplay of forces let loose by the emerging geo-political realities in the region. These peculiarities proved historically crucial. The British, imbued with a modern outlook, were better organised and were clear about their strategic objectives, which they had formulated with precision. The Dogras, under Gulab Singh, though feudal in their outlook and militarily ill-equipped, were tough, ambitious and well-prepared. Their biggest strength lay in being led by an able and experienced leader. The Sikhs, on the other hand, were brave but reckless. They had a fine army but were divided and weakened by factionalism, jealousy, indiscipline and lack of worthwhile leadership.

It was an opportunity that British had been waiting for in their quest of getting the whole of India under their sway. With considerable help from Muslims (which sealed the Sikh-Muslim animosity for ever), the British finally confronted the Sikhs, resulting in a series of Anglo-Sikh wars.

The Sikhs suffered a crucial defeat on December 13, 1845 at Har-ka-Patta and in the next battle, which was fought at Sobraon on February 10, 1846, Sikhs were comprehensively defeated and their empire virtually disappeared. The result of these wars was officially formalised by the protagonists by signing of two treaties; the first, Treaty of Lahore, was signed on March 9, 1846. Under this treaty, Sikhs were required to relinquish the Jallandhar Doab and both banks of the Sutlej River and further pay an indemnity of ₹ 1.5

crores, failing which they would have to cede additional area to the British. The Lahore Durbar could not pay the full amount of the indemnity. Gulab Singh sensed an opportunity by visualising the future scenario in the absence of Sikh empire and saw the benefits of making peace with the British. He therefore, came forward to pay ₹ 75 lacs (175,000 US $ in present currency) on behalf of the Sikhs out of the above amount. This resulted in the signing of Treaty of Amritsar on March 16, 1846, by virtue of which, the British Government transferred 'ever independent possession,' of some of the ceded areas to Gulab Singh, in return for the above amount. These areas included the hilly tracts falling between east of Indus and west of Ravi Rivers and Kashmir. Thus Kashmir passed into the hands of Gulab Singh, who became the first Maharaja of the Dogra rule in Kashmir.

In the years to come, repeated attempts were made by Sheikh Abdullah to ignite the passions of Kashmiris against the Maharaja by rubbishing the Treaty of Amritsar by calling it "a sale deed in which Kashmiris were sold like cattle because the British wanted to fill their



Map of Jammu and Kashmir during Dogra Rule

coffers."[4] However, the fact of the matter is that when Sikhs had conquered Kashmir, it was Gulab Singh who had done it for them. Therefore, he was the de-facto ruler of the Valley, which the Treaty turned de-jure. Francis Younghusband writes:

"Raja Gulab Singh is already mentioned as accompanying Ranjit Singh's troops on their victorious march to Kashmir in 1819. On the death of Ranjit Singh, there was much violence among the Sikh soldiers and the Governor of Kashmir was surrounded by them. Therefore, about 5,000 men, nominally under the command of Sher Singh, Ranjit Singh's successor, was sent to Kashmir to restore authority. This was the year 1841, when the British were still behind the Sutlej, but were engaged in the fruitless and disastrous expedition to Kabul, which resulted in the murder of their envoy. Gulab Singh quelled the mutiny in Kashmir, placed a Governor of his own and from this day became a virtual master of the Valley, though till 1846, it nominally belonged to Sikh rulers at Lahore."[5]

With Sikh empire in a disarray and Gulab Singh firmly entrenched in Jammu, the former could do little to rein in latter, who correctly assessed that aligning with the British was a far better option than confronting them on behalf of Sikhs. In the given circumstances, "Any sense of obligation he may have felt towards Sikhs for establishing his rule over Jammu vanished before his realistic appraisal of the eventual outcome of the struggle."[6]

Even though the Treaty had been signed and the mutiny quelled, another twist to the tale was yet to unfold. Due to internecine struggle among the claimants to Maharaja Ranjit Singh's throne at Lahore, Lal Singh of Lahore *Durbar* instructed Sheikh Imam-ud-Din, the last Sikh Governor of Kashmir, not to hand over the possession of Kashmir to the Maharaja. However, Gulab Singh would have none of it. He sent a Dogra force, alongwith some British soldiers, under the young prince, Yuvraj Ranbir Singh, to subjugate the rebellious

governor. Professor Somnath Wakhlu writes, "The force came sweeping with relentless fury and the governor surrendered Kashmir to Maharaja Gulab Singh; hence in a way, his conquest of Kashmir."[7]

In due course of time, the state became one of the most important and the biggest princely states, with its Maharaja holding an honorary rank of Major General of the British Indian Army, who was entitled to a 21-gun-salute (one among five such rulers), whenever he visited a British army formation during the Raj.

It has remained a mystery as to why the British did not rule Kashmir directly, but handed it over to Gulab Singh in return for a paltry sum of ₹ 75 lacs. Were the British over-stretched? Did they merely want to reward Gulab Singh for his contribution to their victory, particularly for having protected their northern flank during their wars with Sikhs? Perhaps, the answer lies in the dispatch of Governor General, Lord Hardinge to the Secret Committee of East India Company. The dispatch, written on March 19, 1846, states:

"I request your honourable committees attending to the treaty made with Maharaja Gulab Singh, by which a Rajput principality of the hill districts has been constructed, extending from the Ravi to the Indus and including the province of Kashmir. The Maharaja is declared by the treaty independent of the Lahore state and under the protection of the British Government. As it was of utmost importance to weaken the Sikh Nation before its Government could be re-established, I considered the appropriation of this part of ceded territory to be the most expedient measure I could devise for that purpose, by which a Rajput dynasty will act as a counter poise against the power of a Sikh prince, the son of late Ranjit Singh and both will have a common interest in resisting attempt on the part of any Mohammedan power to establish an independent state on this side of Indus or even to occupy Peshawar."[8]

In the existing situation, the British put up Rajputs against Sikhs

and interposed both between the 'Empire' and the Muslims in the north-west. Besides, by treating the Rajput dynasty independent of Sikhs; it restricted the degree of their sovereignty.

It was widely believed that Gulab Singh had borrowed ₹ 75 lacs, to be paid to the British, from Diwan Jawala Sahai, a rich Punjabi from Aminabad. He was, therefore, indebted to the latter for having raised this amount at a short notice. Sahai then became the first Prime Minister of the state. His office remained hereditary for many years, thereafter. Consequently, Sahai and his successors imported many people from their own area to fill-up various administrative posts in the state. In due course, these people, locally called *Khatri*, inundated the Valley.

In 1852, the British forced an officer on special duty on Gulab Singh, who now became the eyes and ears of the British and a virtual second centre of power. In due course of time, British Residents were also posted in Poonch, Ladakh and Baltistan. Nevertheless, Maharaja Gulab Singh proved to be a tough administrator who restored law and order and instilled trust among the people in the administration. He launched a ruthless campaign against the lawless marauders like Galwans, Khokhas and Bombas and disciplined them with an iron hand. He introduced a number of reforms in the distribution of land and *begaar* (see n.13, p.47). He ensured that a shawl weaver was no longer a serf. The Maharaja also rationed the food grains, as its monopoly by some vested interests during times of scarcity, had created enormous suffering among the people. It was said of his times that, "a bride laden with jewellery could walk in the dead of night in a street of Srinagar without any fear."[9]

Maharaja Gulab Singh died in 1857, to be followed by Ranbir Singh. It was during the latter's rule in 1867 that British Trade Agency was established at Leh, the capital of Ladakh. This was done to establish British control over the trade routes to Central Asia.

During the 1857 uprising, the Maharaja sided with the British. But despite this vital assistance rendered to the British, the latter surreptitiously incited the Muslim majority of the valley against their 'Hindu' Maharaja. Ranbir Singh, realising the potential of this insidious propaganda, decided to shift his capital to Srinagar during the summer months. This would enable him to address their grievances expeditiously, besides creating a sense of belonging among the Kashmiri Muslims.

In 1838, the capital shifted from Jammu to Srinagar for the first time, when the Maharaja moved there alongwith his retinue of nearly 200 people in summer. This shifting of the State's capital, known as *Durbar Move,* has now become a yearly routine. The state capital moves from Srinagar to Jammu in winter (first week of November) and returns to Srinagar in summer (first week of May). Ranbir Singh was followed by Pratap Singh in 1885.

"In 1889, the British, wary of increasing Russian pressure towards the Pamirs, instituted the Gilgit Agency under the direct rule of the British political agent, and from that time Gilgit paid even less allegiance to the Maharaja of Kashmir."[10] Pratap Singh did not have a male issue of his own, which led to great deal of court intrigues. Coupled with the fact that Russian presence in the north was getting worrisome for the British, the Maharaja's rule was replaced by a council, which lasted till 1905, when the Maharaja was re-installed. A cart road was constructed between Jammu and Srinagar by Maharaja Pratap Singh, which served as his personal pathway to Srinagar. However, it was thrown open to public in 1922, and today serves as the main link between Srinagar and Jammu.

During Maharaja Pratap Singh's reign, most of the senior appointments in administration were filled by educated, well-trained and experienced officers from outside the state, mainly from Bengal and Punjab. Bengali ministers and officers played important role in

giving shape to social life and in developmental activities. "Among Bengali officials, the well-known names were Sir Albion Banerjee (Administration), LC Bose (Chief Engineer Electrical for 11 years), JC Chatterjee (Archeology) and Dr Mitra (Health Services). Many of the engineers, judicial officers and administrators came from Punjab. KB Abdul Qayoom was Chief Justice of State High Court and Bodh Raj Sawhny, a Barrister from Lahore, was charged with creating the higher judiciary structure. Later, when High Court was set up, he was appointed as officiating Chief Justice."[11]

Pratap Singh was succeeded by his nephew, Maharaja Sir Hari Singh Bahadur, in 1925. It was during his rule that Kashmiri Pandits became the vanguard of the movement that finally brought in the state-subject law. This movement, launched by Kashmiri Pandits, was mainly aimed to forestall any attempt by the British to acquire land in the state. Ironically, Kashmiri Muslims who consider the state-subject law an article of faith, opposed it tooth and nail. The monopoly of the administrative machinery of the state by outsiders had also created a strong resentment among the native nobility and the feudal class. Sensing the political implications such an emotional issue would have for his rule in the state, the Maharaja acted swiftly. He promulgated a notification in 1927, which later became the State-Subject Law. This law created three categories of State subjects; category 'A' included those who were hereditary citizens of the state and had landed property. Category 'B' included those who came from outside, but had acquired landed property in the state, and category 'C' was formed of those people who were either employed in Jammu and Kashmir State Government Service or had been living in the state for the past ten years, but did not own any landed property.

Dogra rule witnessed significant developments in the field of communication. Many post and telegraph offices were opened throughout the state. The administrative machinery was toned up by completely overhauling it, wherever required. Criminal justice

system too was modernised by applying British practices to the state with appropriate modifications. Significant developments in the field of industry and agriculture during this period benefited all sections of the society. By now, British advisors were placed in various departments like, army, public works department, and those dealing with state accounts, land settlement issues, etc. However, the Maharaja was kept on a tight leash by the British who exercised strict control on his administration. It can safely be concluded that it now became a British-Dogra rule rather than a purely Dogra rule.

About the state of Kashmiri Pandits during this period, it can safely be said that whereas they enjoyed complete religious freedom, they were politically and otherwise confined to the margins. With outsiders filling-up the administrative appointments, Pandits were deprived of the legitimate means of earning their livelihood, which happened to be through a government service.

Notes

1. Dr Satish Ganjoo, *Satanic Holocaust of Kashmiri Pandits*: downloaded from KP Network@yahoogroups.com, on 31 March, 2006.
2. W Moorcroft and G Trebeck, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces* (1819–1835), two Volumes, edited by H.H Wilson, (London: John Murray, 1841). Moorcroft was a veterinary doctor posted in the military stud farm department of East India Company. He travelled extensively in Kashmir, Kullu, Mansarover, Ladakh.and Bokhara.
3. Sir William Barton, *The Princess of India: (*Nisbet and Company, London, 1934), p. 121.
4. Prof Som Nath Wokhlu, *Daily Excelsior,* December 25, 2000.
5. Sir Francis Younghusband, *Kashmir* (Black, London, 1909): Francis Younghusband was a British Political Resident in Kashmir. An extensive traveller and explorer, he roamed widely in Himalayas, Kashmir, Central Asia and China.
6. Joseph Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir*, (Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 13.
7. Prof Som Nath Wokhlu, *Daily Excelsior* December 25, 2000
8. Joseph Korbel, n. 6, and Francis Younghusband, n. 5, quoted here by Jagmohan in *My frozen Turbulence in Kashmir.*
9. Francis Younghusband, n. 5.
10. Joseph Korbel, n. 6, p. 13.
11. Sati Sahwney, *Kashmir Sentinel*, December 2006.

5

LAND, ITS PEOPLE AND COMMUNICATIONS

"Dawn first appears with a golden radiance on the eternal snows and in the evening, the light renders homage to the peaks of the towering mountains." —*Kalhana*

State of Jammu and Kashmir is located in a rectangular area in the extreme north-west corner of the Indian sub-continent. Before the partition of India in 1947, it was spread over an area of 263,717 sq km, making it the largest princely state in size. It lay between 32.17 and 36.58 degrees north latitude and 73.26 and 80.30 degrees east longitude. However, being mountainous in much of its huge geographical area, it was sparsely populated at about 17 people/sq km, with its total population of approximately 4 million, living in its 39 towns and 8,903 villages. Its urban population was estimated to be 362,314 and rural population as 3,503,929. However, Kashmir valley itself was densely populated.

Apart from its size, in the context of changing international situation in mid and late forties, the state had and continues to have great geo-strategic importance. It was surrounded on three sides by foreign states. To its east lay Tibet; in the north it had Chinese Turkmenistan or Sinkiang (Xinjian) as its immediate neighbour; in

the west lay Afghanistan. After the British left in 1947, its south and south-west was bordered by another state, Pakistan.

For administrative purposes, the state, during the Dogra rule, was divided into four provinces, each headed by a governor. These were Jammu, Kashmir, Gilgit and Ladakh. During British rule, the government of undivided India had taken Gilgit on lease in 1931. On termination of such lease, Maharaja regained its possession in 1947. The respective governors administered their territory through the *Wazir-e-Wazarat,* who headed each district. Some medium sized districts, like Mirpur, Rajouri, Anantnag and Baramulla were well populated; whereas Ladakh, comprising thousands of sq km of barren rock and snow, was sparsely populated. Poonch, on the other hand, was a special case in itself, as it was a feudal *jagir* belonging to a *Raja.* The most ubiquitous feature of the state's topography is the sweep of towering mountain ranges which occupy major part of its geographical area. A traveller approaching the state from south will come across following mountain ranges as he traverses till its extreme north.

Main Mountain Ranges

Shivalik Range: Moving north from the plains of Jammu region, the topography gradually gives way to low hills, with an altitude of between 610 m to 1,220 m, running in numerous ridges parallel to the Pir Panjal Range. "Made up of usual sandstone, these ridges often sloped up gradually from the south and presented a sheer cliff face from the north."[1] "The southern slopes of these spurs are covered with forests of sub-montane variety."[2] These spurs finally merge with the parent range, the Pir Panjal Range.

Pir Panjal Range (3050–4550 m): This range emanates to the south from the Great Himalayan Range at the western border of Spiti and runs for about 480 km to the west, parallel to the mother range up to Baramulla/Uri and the gorge of Jhelum. This continuous and unbroken range, that forms the southern wall of Kashmir valley is cut

at only one place, i.e., at Kishtwar by River Chenab. The eastern half of the range also serves to divide the drainage of Chenab from those of two other big rivers, namely Beas and Ravi. It separates Kashmir valley from Jammu and the outer hills, which have big towns like, Akhnur, Kotli, Mirpur, Bhimber, Naushera, Rajouri and Poonch. Two of the few important passes located over it are, Rohtang Pass (3978 m), which joins Kulu with Lahaul in Himachal Pradesh and the Banihal Pass (above 2743 m), over which passes the highway from Jammu to Srinagar, called National Highway 1A (NH1A).

The other passes include the Pir Panjal Pass (3494 m) connecting Rajouri district with Shopian in the valley and Nilkantha Pass (3636 m) that provides access from Poonch to Gulmarg. Some of the famous peaks located within Pir Panjal Range are, Kaunsar Nag (3902 m), Trattakoti (4732 m — highest on the range) and Romesh Thong (later named as Sun set Peak by Dr Arthur Neve[3], after he had climbed it). Tosha Maidan, the magnificent and vast grassy highland of immense beauty, lies further to the north of Pir Panjal Range. For centuries, it has served as pristine pasture for the shepherds who graze their livestock here in the summer months (n. 14, p. 47). On the north-west lies the 3847 m high Kazi Nag Range, famous for Markhor, an endangered species of wild goat. Further ahead stands the towering peak of Nanga Parbat, which at 8114 m, is among the tallest in the world.

In the east of the Valley stands the formidable and religiously significant mountain called Harmukh, with its peak standing at 5152 m. Sir Walter Lawrence records that according to local legend, "The gleam from the vein of green emerald in the summit of mountain renders all poisonous snakes harmless." Another prominent peak in the east, which is visible from all over the city is Mahadev (3966 m). On the south of the valley are located Amaranth (5280 m) and Kolhoi (5425 m). In the local language the peak is known as *Gwash Brari*, meaning 'Goddess of Dawn.' Kashmiri word '*brär*' is derived from Sanskrit *bhattārikā*, meaning 'goddess.'

The beauty of the extensive mountain ranges and their peaks that ring the Valley, is aptly summed up Sir Walter Lawrence, thus:-

"...In the early morning sun they are often delicate semi-transparent violet relieved against a saffron sky and with light vapour clinging round their crests. Then the rising sun deepens the shadows, and produces sharp outlines and strong passages of purple and indigo in the deep ravines. Later on, it is nearly all blue and lavender, with white snow peaks and ridges under a vertical sun..."[4]

The Great Himalayan Range (4550–6050 m): The Great Himalayan Range extends in the north-westerly direction from the point where the Pir Panjal Range emanates from it, and serves to act as a watershed between the catchment of Chenab/Jhelum on one side and Indus on the other. In the east, it separates Lahaul in Himachal from Rupshu in the south-east Ladakh, and in the west it separates Kishtwar and Kashmir valley from the Ladakh highlands and Baltistan. This range too has some strategically important passes over it, namely, the Barachala Pass (4890 m) on Kulu-Leh road, Umasi La (5294 m) joining Kishtwar with Zanskar valley, Chilung La (4401 m) that leads to the watershed between the headwaters of Zanskar and Suru Rivers of Ladakh. Then there is Zoji La (3529 m) on the Srinagar-Leh road and Kamri and Burzil Passes (4198 m) that permit access from Srinagar to Gilgit. This mighty range finally ends at the massif of Nañga Parbat (8126 m), though a spur continues to run in west-south-west direction till it reaches the right bank of Jhelum near Muzzafarabad. It is here that it faces the end point of Pir Panjal Range on the other side of the deep gorge of the Jhelum. Beyond the great Himalayan Range lie Ladakh and Baltistan.

The eastern wall of the valley is formed by one of the two major branches (4572 m) that takes off from the Great Himalayan Range at Zoji La and extends south towards Chenab, separating the drainages of Chenab and Jhelum in the process. Close to Kishtwar, it veers to



A view of imposing Himalayan Range

the west and finally meets the Pir Panjal Range near Banihal Pass. The access from the valley to Kishtwar across this range is restricted due to the non-availability of passes except a few difficult ones at heights over 3353 m. Importance of this range is also due to the fact that from the root of one of its major southern spurs, near Amarnath cave, emanates a minor spur that runs due west, forming the southern wall of the famous Sindh valley. The famous peaks of Kolahoi (5425 m) and Mahadev (3966 m), so prominently visible from the valley, are located on this minor spur.

The second major branch that takes off from Zoji La runs west, separating Kashmir Valley from the Kishenganga Valley. The most prominent pass over it, namely the Rajdhani Pass (3638m), connects Srinagar with Gilgit. It moves along the left bank of the Kishenganga River over some distance, finally turning south and joining Jhelum near Uri. The southern extension of this range, also known as the

Kazinag mountains, forms the western wall of the Kashmir valley. These mountains are also famous for the big Markhor.

Zanskar Range (4000–5750 m): It runs parallel to and just north of the Great Himalayan Range. With an average height of 6096 m, when viewed from the north, this range appears smaller, as the plateau on which it is located, is itself 3810 m above mean sea level. Zanskar River, that joins Indus River a few km west of Leh, after piercing through the Zanskar Range, is formed by numerous snow-fed mountain streams that lie in the desolate region between the Zanskar and the Great Himalayan Ranges. This vast region of squandered rock and snow is one of the most desolate areas in this part of the world, inhabited by only some wandering herdsmen and their flock. The region has only one long and difficult route that connects Kulu and Simla in Himachal with Leh over passes at altitudes of over 4877 m. Zanskar Range, bounded by Suru River, joins the Great Himalayan Range in the west near Zoji La. The Indus River runs along the Zanskar Range, through a constricted valley. The towns of Leh, Kargil and Skardu lie in the interior valleys formed by the tributaries that feed Indus River. Before India's independence in 1947, Leh, the capital of Ladakh, drew its importance from the fact that it was located at a central point on the caravan routes to Yarkand, Lhasa, Simla, Srinagar and Gilgit.

Ladakh Range (4550–57500 m): It runs north of the Indus valley, separating it from the Shyok valley, till a few km above Skardu where the Shyok River joins Indus, through a gap between Ladakh Range and Haramosh Range of the mighty Karakoram.

The Great Karakoram Range (5150–7300 m): Beyond Indus and Shyok, towards the north lie even mightier mountains, that form the hub of the enormous Karakoram Range, also called the Mustagh. These mountains contain a series of sky touching heights, within which are located the world's most gigantic and ancient glaciers.

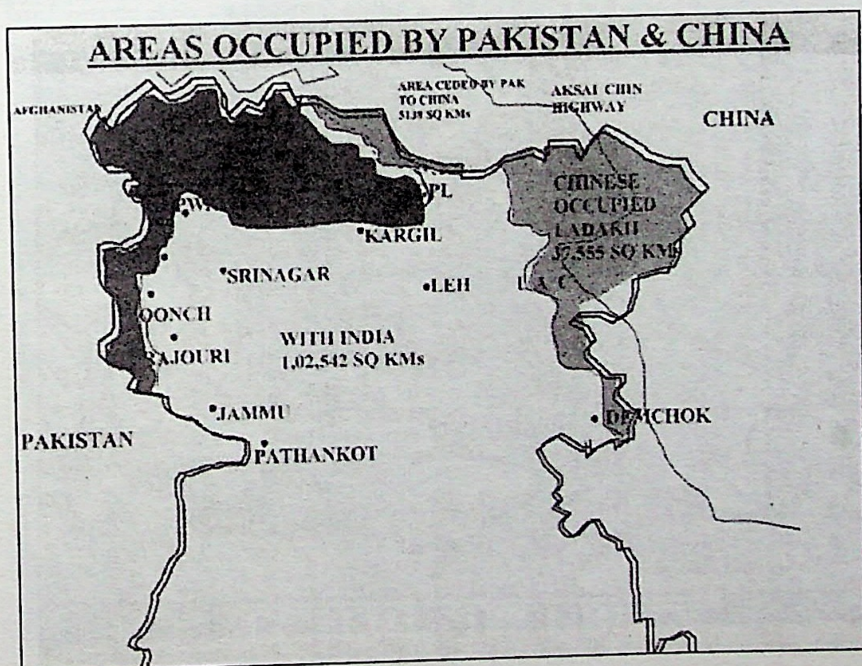
There are also huge swathes of utter desolation which have remained unexplored even till today. Even the most courageous explorers and mountaineers visit these isolated, barren and inhospitable surroundings, rarely. Besides K2, which at 8610 m is the second highest mountain peak in the world, next only to Mount Everest, the Karakoram Range has many other tall peaks of over 7620 m. Some of the world's greatest and longest glaciers lie within its vast and barren interior regions. The highest battlefield in the world today, spread over Siachen, Boltoro, Hispar and Biafo glaciers stretching for roughly 80 kms, is situated in the Karakoram. In the olden days, on both sides of this mountain mass, ran famous caravan routes. One was from Leh to Yarkand over the Karakoram Pass at 5575 m and the other from Gilgit to Kashgar over the Mintaka Pass, at 4709 m.

Regions Comprising the State

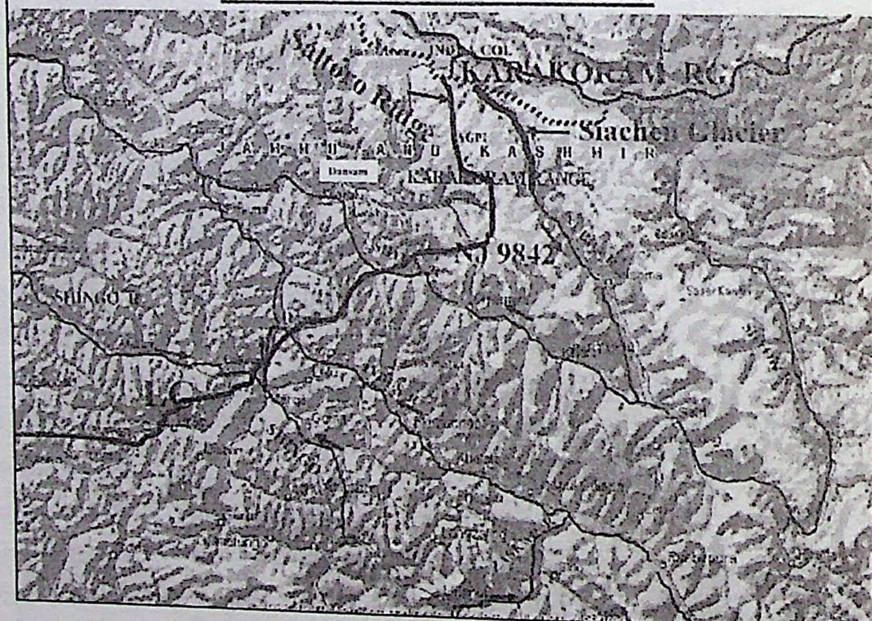
The State of Jammu and Kashmir is divided into three well-defined geographical regions, each having the status of an administrative division, namely, Jammu, including the outer hills; Kashmir valley in the central part and the high mountainous region of Ladakh in the north. Historically, the mighty mountain ranges dividing these three regions, determined not only the diversity in topography, but also its cultural heritage, economy, social organisation, language, ethnic composition and even flora and fauna. Later, such diversity gave rise to diverse political aspirations, too. These mountain ranges also determined the administrative divisions of the state. Its climatic regions also, roughly coincide with the administrative divisions; Ladakh, having arctic cold desert conditions, Kashmir, having mild temperate climate and the Jammu division having sub-tropical conditions. Annual rainfall too is determined by these mountain ranges. Ladakh receives the least rainfall of all, viz., 92.6 mm (3.7 inches), Srinagar, 650 mm (25.6 inches) and Jammu 1115.9 mm (44 inches).

It is interesting to see that in no Indian state does geography so deeply impact the diversity of race, language, ethnicity, economy, climate, politics, administration, etc, as it does in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Its different parts have little in common with each other. Frankly, it was merely an accident of history that brought them together as a single state. Frederic Drew once remarked, "The territories of Jammu and Kashmir have no other bond of cohesion than the fact of Maharaja's rule; no simple name for it exists."[5]

Despite being the largest state of pre-partition India in 1947, today large parts of the state are under the illegal occupation of China and Pakistan. In fact, with barely 139,443.92 sq km under its control, India administers approximately 46 per cent of its geographical area. Pakistan occupies 86017.81 sq km in Jammu and Kashmir, China has under its occupation 38256 sq km in Aksai Chin, through which passes its National Highway 219, connecting Lazi and Xinjiang in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). Though the region is barren




MAJOR RANGES
P O K
Mardan
Peshawar
PAKISTAN
Gujrat
Sargodha
Gujranwala


SIACHEN GLACIER
Saltoro Ridge
KARAKORAM RG
Siachen Glacier
NJ 9842

RIVERS & RANGES

and nearly devoid of habitation, it has great strategic significance for China, as it connects its two restive regions, Tibet and Xingjian. The construction of this road started in 1951 and was completed in 1957, without India getting a whiff of it; or that is the general perception.* An additional 5480 sq km was ceded to China on 99 years lease by Pakistan from its occupied areas, in 1963. As a *quid pro quo* Pakistan received from China all it needed for building a nuclear bomb. This stretch of land falls in the Shaksgam and Muztagh Valley, which lies north of Siachen and close to Karakoram Pass. In the

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* To say that Nehru and the Government of India did not know about this road, is not borne out by some recently declassified documents and various articles and books written by those who dealt with the subject.

In 1953, the Chinese had succeeded in forcing Nehru to close the Indian Agency in Tibet, as a prelude to the commencement of the construction of Tibet-Xinjiang road that would pass through Aksai Chin, the undisputed territory of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Around the same time, Indian Military Attache in Beijing, Brig SS Malik had, in his report to the Government of India, made references to this road construction activity. A year later, he confirmed this by adding that the road passed through Indian territory of Aksai Chin.

pre-partition days, it lay in Shigar in Baltistan and is approximately 25 per cent of the Northern Areas (now renamed Gilgit-Baltistan by Pakistan, under whose illegal occupation it is). This area has since been incorporated into the Xinjiang Autonomous Region by China. Incidentally, Pakistan harnessed two small glaciers north of Sia Kangri in the Shaksgam Valley and diverted them to Indus, upsetting China in the process.

The State's boundaries with other countries are a medley of nomenclatures that more than anything else distinguishes its

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The information about the construction of this road was further confirmed by a British adventurer, Sydney Wignall, who led the first Welsh Himalayan Expedition to climb Mount Gurla Mandhata, close to Mount Kailash (height 25,355 ft), overlooking Mansarovar and Rakshastal lakes in Tibet, in 1955. He had been contacted by the Indian Military Intelligence officers in London, prior to the commencement of the expedition, and asked to collect information on this road.

During the expedition, Wignall collected vital information about the feverish construction activity on this road. He was, however, detained by the Chinese PLA on the suspicion of being a CIA spy and kept in prison. The Chinese eventually released him after some weeks on a high altitude pass, hoping that lack of oxygen, intense cold and snow-blizzards would kill him. However, the redoubtable adventurer somehow, made it back to India and reported the matter to his 'contact' in the Military Intelligence Directorate. Through, General KS Thimmaya, the soon-to-be-made the Chief of the Army Staff, the matter reached the highest levels of the Government, but it was treated with disdain. In his book *Spy on the Roof of the World*, Wignall writes that he was later told by his 'contact' in Military Intelligence, "Our illustrious Prime Minister Nehru, who is so busy on the world stage telling the rest of the mankind how to live, has too little time to attend to the security of his own country. Your material was shown to Nehru by one of our senior officers, who plugged hard. He was criticised by Krisna Menon in Nehru's presence for lapping up 'American CIA agent-provocateur propaganda.' Menon has completely suppressed your information." "so it was all for nothing?" I (Wignall) asked. "Perhaps not, we will keep working away at Nehru. Some day he must see the light and realise the threat that communist Chinese occupation of Tibet poses to India," replied the contact.

No wonder, General Thimmaya on the eve of his retirement in 1961, said while speaking to his officers, "I hope that I am not leaving you as cannon fodder for the Chinese communists."[6]

After the Chinese aggression of 1962, the Official Report published by the Ministry of Defence, Government of India, stated, "China started constructing motorable road in summer 1955. ...On October 6, 1957, the Sinkiang-Tibet road was formally opened with a ceremony in Gartok and 12 trucks on a trial run from Yarkand reached Gartok."[7]

Though the existence of this road was discussed in Parliament (Lok Sabha) in August 1959, it was actually in 1955, that the Government had information about this road.

different occupiers. With China, it shares a border running to 860 kms, out of which International Border (IB) covers 270 kms, Line of Actual Control (LAC) — area bordering Aksai Chin, covers a distance of 530 kms, and remaining 60 kms covers the borders of area ceded to it by Pakistan. In the Ladakh/Kargil region, it covers 322 kms of its border with Pakistan; 198 kms of LoC and 124 kms of AGPL (Actual Ground Position Line).[8] In the Valley, the LoC covers a distance of 520 kms, whereas in Jammu region, it covers a distance of 225 kms. Jammu region also covers a distance of 265 km of international border along which runs the Punjab province of Pakistan. So, Jammu and Kashmir's borders with Pakistan and China add up to 2062 kms, known by different names.

Ethnic and Linguistic Composition of the State

Jammu and Kashmir is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and a multi-lingual state with a shared historical past. A large number of ethnic diversities, cutting across the religious divide, make up the State's current population.

In 1947, an overwhelming majority of the people in the Valley were Muslims by faith. The only Hindus left in the valley were of Brahmanical caste, known as Kashmiri Pandits. Historically, ethnically and culturally, the Kashmiri Pandits are closer to Kashmiri Muslims than to the Dogra Hindus of Jammu. They differ greatly from Hindus in Jammu region or even from Hindus in rest of India. Some of the religious and social practices of Kashmiri Pandits are very unique and are exclusively observed by them. Some of these differences are so great that they form a distinct group in themselves. As H Sender says, "The differences between the two are so great that it would be more sensible to view them as Kashmiris, rather than to view them as Brahmins."[9] A gifted community, "Kashmiri Brahman had been most famous as a highly intelligent and gifted community.

They were the only community of the state to go out in large numbers and earn their livelihood in the far corners of India."[10] Today the valley is almost entirely Muslim, with Pandits having been reduced to not more than 3,000, all told (census figs., 1991).

Nearly half of Kashmiri Muslim population is formed of several ethnic minorities. These include over 800,000 Kashmiri Shias, almost the same number of nomadic Gujjars and Bakerwals, and over 200,000 Dar and Balti Muslims (mostly Shias). Despite professing the same faith, they still maintain their specific ethnic identities. The other half of the population is Sunni Muslims who form a majority in Kashmir valley, though they have their own social divisions. To start with, they freely inter-married with those Muslims who came to the Valley from outside. Socially, however, the two groups have their distinctive identities. One group traces its ancestry to the thousand odd Syed families who came to the Valley with Syed Mir Ali Hamadani and his son Mir Muhammad Hamadani. During the Muslim rule, the Syeds, being direct descendants of Prophet Mohammad, enjoyed the privileges of the ruling class. Socially, they could be considered the Brahmans among Muslims. Those families which had inter-married with the Syeds, too claimed this exclusivity. Even today, they enjoy this social exclusivity. The other group consists of the descendants of original Hindu converts. To some extent, they still display the social divisions of their original faith, while at the same time suffer from a sense of social inferiority compared to Syeds.

At the time of partition, 12.5 per cent of the population of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) comprised of Hindus and Sikhs. Both are non-existent there today. At that time, Sikhs were mainly concentrated in Muzzafarabad district. Pakistani occupation of that part of the State during 1947–48 war, forced them to migrate to

other parts of the state. "Most of them were originally Brahmins imported by Raja Sukhjivan (see chapter 3) and were converted to Sikhism in the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh."[11] At present, "There are around 80,000 Sikhs living in 121 villages spread in eight districts of Kashmir valley."[12]

Gujjar Muslims in Jammu have closer ethnic ties with Hindu Gujjars of neighbouring states than with their co-religionists of Kashmir. Same is the case with Buddhists and Muslims of Ladakh, who share a common heritage and racial background. Jammu region and Kargil have nearly 100,000 Shia Muslims each. Gujjars in Jammu region are not specifically concentrated at only one place, but are spread out in various districts like, Poonch, Rajouri, Udhampur, Kathua and Doda.

As far as languages spoken are concerned, apart from Kashmiri, which is spoken with minor variations in different parts of the valley, other languages widely spoken in the state are; Dogri, Pothwari, Balti, Ladakhi, Gojri, Punjabi and lately Urdu.

Regional Diversity

Each region of the State has its own geographical, climatic and ethnic diversity, which is difficult to find in any other state of India. The same are described below.

Jammu Region

This is the southern region of the state, bordering Punjab, including within it 8 to 24 km wide tract of plains, generally arid and stony. These consist of a number of dry river beds through which numerous streams, coming down from the hills, flow. Kalidhar Range of mountains, the southern-most range, varying in height between 900 and 1350 m, separates the hill region of Jammu from its plains

sector. With an average elevation of 366 m, Jammu region contains a number of fertile tracts which are heavily populated.

The huge network of hills and narrow valleys in the Jammu region are inhabited by sturdy and war like peasants of the Rajput stock, having wiry and tough physique with sharp features. The eastern parts around Jammu are mostly inhabited by Hindus, called Dogras. In the western parts, these Hindus had largely converted to Islam, with Chibs predominant in Bhimber and Mirpur and Sudans in Poonch. After conversion to Islam, they continued to retain the Rajput characteristics of honesty, bravery, courage and simplicity. Their women are famous for their fine features. In fact, the Dogra royalty selected their Maharanis from Hindu Chibs. Agriculture and soldiering are their main professions. The Dogra rulers showed great fondness for both Hindu and Muslim Rajputs of this region due to their uprightness and martial spirit and they were allowed to wear arms while others were forbidden. The army of the Dogra rulers was largely composed of them. Some of the finest soldiers of the British Indian Army came from this region. The tradition continues to the present day.

Historically, the outer hills of Jammu region were inhabited by the turbulent and volatile Khokhas and Bombas in the Jhelum gorge, while the higher reaches, right upto the Pir Panjal Range, were and continue to be inhabited by the Gujjars. The Gaddis are mostly found in Kishtwar. Both, Gujjars and Gaddis are peaceful shepherds leading a nomadic life. Except Gaddis, all others are of Muslim faith.

Doda, which is contiguous to Kishtwar in the south-west and to Kashmir valley in the north-west, was made a separate district by carving it out from Hindu majority Udhampur district some years back. In the present situation, its strategic importance lies in its

unique location, as it is ideally situated in the outer hills of Jammu region; with its northern periphery touching the valley, southern bordering Udhampur, south-west adjoining Kathua and east and south-east bordering Ladakh. Fifty-five per cent of its population of approximately 500,000 is Muslim.

Baltistan-Gilgit and Ladakh Region

Before 1947, the state's largest region happened to be Ladakh, with a total area of 174,376 sq km (approx 78.5 per cent), with Jammu and Kashmir regions occupying 11.5 per cent and 10 per cent of its geographical area respectively. After the 1947–48 war, Pakistan occupied 77,675 sq km of its area in Gilgit-Baltistan region. Ladakh was left with 96,701 sq km. Then China nibbled away 38,000 sq km of this left over area in Aksai Chin. Later still, it got 5,138 sq km on lease from Pakistan from its Gilgit-Baltistan occupied region. At that time, this region was divided into six districts for administration; Hunza-Nagar, Gilgit, Koh-e-Ghizer, Ghanche, Diamir and Skardu. These were further grouped into three agencies or divisions; Diamir, Gilgit and Baltistan, with headquarters at Chilas, Gilgit and Skardu town, respectively. The region is characterised by the world's biggest mountain ranges, desolate and uninhabited areas and sparsely populated valleys. To the north of The Great Himalayan Range lie the massive Karakoram and Kunlun Ranges; in the west is Hindukush and Afghanistan, and to the east lies the high plateau that stretches into Tibet, known as the roof of the world.

The Great Himalayan Range serves as a barrier between the northern areas and rest of the state. The main mountain chain and the river valleys that drain into Indus and its tributaries follow the grain of the country from north-west to south-east. The topography of the ground provides a natural access to the region. This access takes off from its south-west corner, and moves eastwards along

the Indus valley. While doing so, it skirts the Nanga Parbat and enters the nearly unexplored area between the Himalayan and Karakorum Ranges, in the process, avoiding the huge barrier created by the mountains of the former. Except for the eastern region and the provincial capital Leh, the easiest and the shortest route from Srinagar continues to be the one over Zoji La.

The most important geographical feature of this sprawling desolation remains the Indus River. It enters the region in the east, runs all along its length and exits at its south-west corner into North West Frontier Province (NWFP) — now renamed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa of Pakistan. For most of its length, it is a raging torrent, falling with great speed over steep gradients, entering and exiting from deep gorges with fury, and at places, occupying large spaces while spreading over wide plain river beds. "Near the Kashmir-Tibet boundary in the east, it runs at an unbelievable height of 4,200 m. Thereafter, it loses its altitude, as it moves downstream and opposite Leh, 208 kms upstream, it flows at an altitude of 3230 m. Flowing further down, 128 km upstream, it is joined by Shyok River at an altitude of 2350 m, before reaching the junction point with Gilgit River, at an altitude of 1,310 m."[13] In the eastern region, because of the generally uniform height of the mountains (6400 m) and the river valley (3960 m), Indus is not as furious as in the west.

Eastern Ladakh

This is characterised by broad and shallow valleys, relatively low rolling hills and level stretches of rocky plains. Numerous salt water lakes of large size dot this region. These are formed by the accumulating waters of the melting snows in summer which have no outlets, thus turning the water brackish and green in color. In the north-east corner of this area, lie the district of upper Changchenmo River and the plains of Lingzitang, at an altitude of 4880 m. For bulk

of its course below Leh, Indus becomes a raging torrent as it meanders its way between sheer walls of smooth granite. In the olden days, this forced even the hardy travellers with the caravans on the silk route, to abandon the river bank route and cut across the spurs to the elevated plateau. The nature of the terrain is further influenced by the vast difference in the altitude of the river, particularly in the west, where the terrain is exceedingly steep and broken. This can easily be gauged by the incredible difference of over 7000 m in height between the lowest point near Chilas (1015 m), and the highest point, the peak of Nanga Parbat, (8126 m), over a short distance of 51 kms (as crow flies). This region is, therefore, characterised by fast flowing rivers, gushing through deep narrow valleys, precipitous slopes with razor-sharp edges and extremely difficult and rough terrain that tests even the most renowned mountaineers and explorers.

The landscape and the climate of Ladakh region and the rest of the state are quite different from each other. The great barrier of Himalayan Range prevents the rain clouds from moving beyond Kashmir Valley, resulting in scanty annual rainfall of about 15 cm in the west and 5 cm in its eastern region. The landscape is devoid of any vegetation except in areas close to Indus, where it traverses wide stretches in relatively gentle stream. Bare rocks, icy cliffs, long slopes, plains and highlands of stony waste and gravel make up the rest of the landscape. The monotony is broken only by the small fast flowing rivers that line the bottom of many narrow valleys.

In summer and autumn months, the sky is clear blue without a speck of cloud visible anywhere, though in winter, the cloud cover sometime does not lift for days on end. The rarefied atmosphere of the region, besides making the atmosphere dry and bracing, allows the mid day sun to beat down fiercely through it. During night, as the desolate rocks lose heat quickly and became cold, the night temperatures drop to freezing cold. Ladakh is indeed beautiful, but its beauty is not of the

soft and soothing variety that would beckon an idle pleasure seeker or shelter a jaded traveller. Its beauty lies in its mighty mountains that stand haughty and aloof in their desolate, barren and cold solitude. The grandeur of such magnificence is simply breathtaking at one plane, and awe inspiring on the other. These eternally silent mountains have an enormous humbling effect on the human spirit; the tenuousness of his ambitions, the futility of his efforts and the insignificance of his individuality.

Ladakh is also called the 'Land of the Moon', because under the glare of full moon at night, the whole landscape turns magical, like a fairy land of heavenly light and sharp and long shadows. Its half frozen lakes, glistening like bright silver ornaments over it, add to its great beauty. Of late, Ladakh has emerged as a favourite destination for tourists and mountaineers from different parts of the world. The number of expeditions has also increased to nearly 500 of late. "Due to easy accessibility and a few regulations, Stok Kangri in the Zanskar Range and Mentok Kangri in the Korzok valley, among other peaks, have been popular with mountaineers. Stok Kangri is famous among the mountaineers for viewing Nanga Parbat, Mount Kailash and the Nun Kun peaks,"[14] writes Dr KN Pandita.

There are some other significant rivers in this region; Dras River originates south of Kaobalgali near Zoji La and flowing in northerly direction, it joins Indus River south of Marol. Shingko River flows from north-west to south-east, joining Dras River north-west of Kargil, before it joins Indus. Similarly, Zanskar River flows from south-west to north-east and finally joins Indus south of Saspol Gompa.

Inhospitable climatic conditions, high altitude and desert conditions render the ecology of Ladakh very sensitive. Green cover provided by plants, shrubs and grasses, plays a vital role in

maintaining the ecology of the place. Numerous glacial streams feed a wide variety of plants. "The arid region, in fact, is a treasure trove of more than 1,000 local varieties... about 50 per cent of these have medicinal and aromatic properties."[15] The traditional system of Healing (*Sowa Rigpa*) is based on the medicines (*Amchi*) provided by these plants. The system revolves around *Nespasum* (three humours) and *Jungwaina* (five elements) which involves the judicious mix of plants, traditional knowledge and specific ailments. "Even today, in the modern age, the average Ladakhi swears by the *Amchi*."[16]

Gilgit-Baltistan

Far removed from the plains of Punjab, and resting under the shadows of the great Karakoram Range, this region has generally remained cut off in its splendid isolation from the hustle and bustle of the mainland politics. With some of the world's tallest mountains forming its backdrop, the imposing Karakorum, Hindukush, Himalaya and Ladhakh ranges converge here. Indus covers nearly 700 kms of its long journey in this region. The land is characterised by numerous blue-water lakes, some of the world's longest glaciers, white sand dunes and deepest ravines, not seen anywhere else in the world. However, such ruggedness of terrain has not lessened its geo-strategic importance due to the fact that it is nestled in between four countries, Pakistan, Afghanistan, China and India. The availability of vast reserves of natural resources enhances this importance. During the British rule, its importance lay in its usefulness as a *listening post* in the *Great Game*.[17] Thereafter, it provided access to energy-rich Central Asian region.

Being a part of the pre-1947 State of Jammu and Kashmir, and bordering Afghanistan in the present situation, it continues to remain in focus. In addition, its geo-strategic importance has further got a boost due to the Karakoram Highway, which connects Xinjiang

with Pakistan, through Khunjerab Pass, over Karakoram and passes through this region. This Highway provides easy access to China to the ports of Karachi and Gwadar in the Arabian Sea, besides permitting it to keep a close watch on the movement of militants from 'Af-Pak' region to its restive Xinjiang province. Recent media reports indicate that Chinese troops from the People's Liberation Army have been stationed in this area with multiple strategic objectives; chief among these being to encircle India from the north, while at the same time, constitute a 'threat in being'[18] to Indian forces in Kashmir.

There is practically no difference between the Baltis, Ladakhis and Purig-pas of Kargil, as all of them are of Tibetan origin and speak the most ancient form of Tibetan language even today. Their music, dress, food, folklore, epics, etc. are same. That is why radio programmes of Leh and Kargil are popular across the border. Ladakhis and Baltis are peaceful and devoid of any inner conflict. And left to themselves, they would prefer to live with each other in peace. It is only the sub-continental association that has created mistrust among them. For centuries, Ladakh has represented genuine secularism, unlike its theocratic neighbour, Tibet.

The concept of Buddhist/non-Buddhist dichotomy did not exist, though to an outsider, the traditional Ladakhi divide between *Nang-pa* (insider) and *Chi-pa* (outsider) might convey a different impression. The concept merely meant "we" and "they" or a "native" and a "foreigner" and in fact, conveyed a deeper philosophical distinction between *Nang-pa* (internal) and *Chi-pa* (external) truth seeker. This concept had its roots in deeper Buddhist philosophy and denoted the difference between believer in *Nirvana* and *Samsara*. It was the responsibility of the ruler to provide full security to both the practitioners, "even if it required forging security alliances with the Mughal emperors, to repel successive Tibetan forays."[19] In Baltistan, it was the Mons, an Indo-Aryan group, who made it a hub of Buddhism, leading to

a triangular relationship among Kashmiri, Gandhara and Turfan Schools.

Baltistan was ruled by Tibetans until 9–10th century, after which the power shifted into the hands of a local Skardu chieftain. In the 13th century, a young Egyptian adventurer, Ibrahim Shah, reached Baltistan and married the last princess of Skardu. He later founded the Makpon Dynasty. It was during Makpon Bokha's reign in 15th century, that Mir Shamsuddin Araqi (see p. 61) introduced the *Noorbakshiya* order in Baltistan. It was around this period, that Mughal rulers, Sultan Syed Khan Kashgari (1531) and Mirza Haider Dughlat (1532), invaded the region. Some historians believe that in 16–17th century, Persian Twelver Shia clerics made forays into Baltistan, while others believe that Baltis followed *Noorbakshiya* faith right until 19th century, when Sayyid Abbas Al-Musawi (1900) converted them to Shia sect. According to Prof Stobdan, "Baltistan's most powerful Makpon, Ali Sher Khan Anchan (1590–1625), conquered Ladakh and took Gyalpo Jamyang Namgyal to Skardu under captivity. Anchan later gave his daughter, Gyal Khatoon, in marriage to Namgyal. Anchan's descendents ruled the Balti kingdom and maintained close political and cultural ties with Ladakh. He also conquered areas up to Chitral and brought many Shinas/Dards[20] to serve for him." Though the Afghans invaded Skardu in 1779, their rule over the area did not last long enough to leave any imprint.

"Baltistan region is identified by some with the Aparytae of Herodotus, with its reference being found in the ancient 'Inner Asian Epic' of King Kesar and in Ptolemy's Byaltae. Being at the crossroads of many countries, cultures and civilisations, different people called it by different names. The Chinese called the region Palolo and the Dards called it Balor. Arabs named it Baloristan and Tibetans called it Nang-kod. It finds mention in the works of Mughal historians too. They called it Tibet-i-Khurd or Little Tibet," says, Prof Stobdan (n. 5).

In 1840, the region became part of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, when Baltistan, along with Ladakh, was captured by the legendary Dogra General Zorawar Singh.[21] For Britain, its importance was purely strategic in nature. The only exception was opening of a Pashmina processing unit in the region. It served to keep an eye on the Soviet moves in the region. During British rule, Baltistan, Ladakh and Gilgit were one 'Frontier District'. Ladakh *Wazarat* was separated in 1901, with Skardu as its winter capital. In 1947, Pakistan annexed Baltistan by force under "Operation Sledge." With an artificial and forced division between two 'Little Tibets,' this ancient land remained a *cul de sac* since the intertwining relationship between the two came to an abrupt end. After 1947–48, Indo-Pak war, the Ceasefire Line (CFL), that came into being, divided a thriving Himalayan region.

Subsequently, Baltistan particularly suffered ruthless cultural and political purges under Pakistani occupation. Unfortunately for its inhabitants, its vast natural resources fill the coffers of Islamabad rather than being utilised for the benefit of the locals. This has resulted in the people of the region being deprived of even the basic necessities of life. Says Ali Engineer, Rinchen, "...The natives of Gilgit-Baltistan continue to live in Stone Age. The occupiers have deliberately neglected to develop the land according to the needs of its people."[22]

Due to the difference in altitude, terrain and accessibility, people living in the eastern and western parts of this region differ greatly from each other. Gilgit area is inhabited predominantly by Muslims, who resemble the hardy Pashtuns of Afghanistan in their dress, features and habits. The area east of Kargil is dominated by the Buddhists, with their prayer wheels, imposing monasteries and *gompas* being a common sight. Kargil is mostly inhabited by Muslims of Shia persuasion. The inhospitable and barren eastern region is sparsely populated, though further west, population density increases to some

extent. In the valleys people carry out a precarious agriculture and the higher regions are frequented by shepherds with their flock of livestock. At the time of partition of India, 50 per cent population of Gilgit-Baltistan region used to be Shias, 25 per cent Ismailis (akin to Shias) and 25 per cent Sunnis. Though Sunnis in the Diamer district are in majority, in the other five districts they are in a minority.

Zia-ul-Haque, the former military dictator of Pakistan, made strenuous efforts to change the demographic profile of this region by settling Sunnis (mainly Punjabi and Pushtun ex-servicemen) there. Such blatant attempts at reducing the Shia population in their traditional area into a minority, led to a movement demanding the creation of an autonomous and separate (but not independent) Karakoram province, which would have Shia/Ismaili majority. However, the movement was ruthlessly suppressed by Zia. This created a resentment that is believed to have cost him his life in the mysterious plane crash which remains unexplained to the present day. Nevertheless, the policy continued even after he left the scene.

AGPL and Siachen Glacier

Since 1984, India and Pakistan have been locked in a most difficult conflict in the highest battlefield of the world, the Siachen Glacier — the largest glacier outside the Polar region. It is located in the north-eastern corner of Gigit-Baltistan of PoK, with China on its North. India occupies the Soltoro Ridge, 15 to 20 kms west of the Glacier at a height of about 6,060 m, in temperatures that range between 35 and 70 degree Celsius below the freezing point. This ridge forms the western wall of the Siachen Glacier, whereas the Karakoram Range is on its east.

According to the Karachi Agreement, the LoC, (see chapter 8) terminated at grid point NJ 9842. Pakistan insists that the LoC from this point goes north-east wards to Karakoram Pass, putting the

glacier in Pakistan territory; while India, on the other hand, says that the LoC must follow a well-defined geographical feature, viz., the Soltoro Ridge, which Indian troops dominate. This puts the Siachen Glacier in Indian territory.

The dispute, however, was created by a series of sustained and suspicious cartographic depictions in various atlases and maps published by some leading western geographical societies that showed the LoC extending from NJ 9842 in the north-easterly direction right upto the Karakoram Pass; thus putting Siachen Glacier within Pakistan. Even Pakistani maps had not done so till then! Indian suspicions got further strengthened in 1985, when Pakistan published its official 'Atlas of Pakistan'. This map did not depict Gilgit Agency as a disputed territory, which it had always been depicting as such. Baltistan, on whose eastern edge, according to Pakistan, lies the Siachen Glacier, was left unchanged as the disputed territory.

The erroneous depictions of the maps were, probably, the result of the "translation" of the Air Defence Information Zone (ADIZ) marking, which provides zoning boundaries to air traffic controllers in civil and military aviation. However, as strategic expert, Mahroof Raza says, "There can be several ADIZs that could pass through one country, and these do not necessarily identify a boundary line."[23] Nevertheless, publication of such maps only hardened Pakistan's rigid stand on the issue. In early the 1980's, intelligence reports, coupled with activities on the Pakistan side of the Soltoro Ridge, established without doubt, that Pakistan was planning to occupy the Siachen Glacier. Having learnt its lesson in 1962, India pre-empted Pakistani moves and occupied the Soltoro Ridge in April 1984, before Pakistan could do so. Thereafter, Pakistan tried to wrest the positions on the ridge by launching numerous attacks, but failed to dislodge the Indian troops. On the other hand, in one of the most daring attacks in the annals of military history, Indian troops

captured their 'Quaid' post located at a height of about 6,100 m. As a result, India today holds 110 km of the AGPL in the Siachen Glacier and dominates the Pakistani posts militarily at the northernmost tip of the Indo-Pak border.

Siachen's strategic importance lies not so much in its military value but in the fact that it holds approximately 100 million cu m of fresh water. It costs India roughly ₹ 1000 crores annually to hold it. Further south, lies the Ladakh plateau whose mineral wealth, including gold, according to some geologists, has yet to be exploited. Besides, in the present strategic environment, when Chinese presence in PoK has become a reality, Soltoro Ridge provides an access for link-up between Chinese troops Karakoram Pass and Pakistani troops in Siachen. Therefore, Siachen is not a useless piece of ground on which 'not a blade of grass grows' as Nehru famously described Aksai Chin during a debate in Parliament. Construction of Karakoram Highway and its renewed upgradation by China and its flexing of military muscle of late, make Siachen a 'Must Hold' area.

Kashmir Valley

If there is one issue concerning Kashmir on which there is complete unanimity, it is Kashmir's natural splendor. Firdaus described it thus:

Agar firdaus bar ruye zamin ast/hamin ast o hamin ast o hamin ast.[24]
(If the paradise is anywhere on earth it is here; it is here , it is here)

Kalhana says in *Rajtarangini*: "It is a country where sun shines mildly, being the place created by Rishi Kashyap, for His glory — big and lofty houses, learning, saffron, icy cool water and grapes rare in heaven, are plentiful here — Kailasha is the best place in the three worlds (*Trilok*), Himalayas the best place in Kailasha, and Kashmir the best place in Himalayas."[25]

Its broad Himalayan valleys, lush green meadows, icy streams, impressive chinars, snow-capped mountain peaks, many accessible and non-accessible glaciers, silvery waterfalls, cool and icy springs, terraced paddy fields, lakes, big and small, different types of water bodies (including *mars*[26]), rivers and thick forests, make it a place full of vibrant nature at its best. No wonder a Persian poet was moved to write:

Har sokhteh jani kih be Kashmir dar aayad Gar morgh-e-kababast kih ba baal o par aayad.

(Every burned body that comes to Kashmir, even if a grilled rooster; it will revive with wings and feathers).[27]

Kashmir valley is a level stretch, with a length of 135 km and breadth of 32 to 40 km that runs from south-east to north-west at an average elevation of 1,829 m. River Jhelum, its most prominent physical feature, flows right across the entire length of the valley, encompassing a catchment area of roughly 10,360 sq km. Kashmir fulfills the geographical description of a valley, enclosed as it is on all sides by huge snowy mountain ranges, viz, the Pir Panjal in the south, the Himmalayan Range in the north, and the massive spurs of these two gigantic ranges in the east. In west it is enclosed by the Shamsabari Range, with its height varying between 3,353 to 4,572 m. The other peculiar physical features of the valley are the flat and arid hill tops with steep sides called the *Karewa* that mostly appear at places where hills peter out into the valley. Geologists believe these to be dating back to the period when Kashmir valley was a huge lake (refer to chapter 1). Kashmir valley and its surrounding mountain ranges are dotted with a number of lakes, with Wullar being the largest (see chapter 5). Besides this, Dal Lake in Srinagar is the most famous and Manasbal and Nagin Lakes, perhaps the most beautiful.

The Valley boasts of many snow-fed streams and springs; though, the famous ones among these, namely, Kishenganga, Liddar and Sindh

could actually qualify as rivers in their own right. All these and other snow-fed streams flowing through numerous side valleys, keep its rich alluvial soil well watered, before finally discharging their waters into Jhelum. The main crop of the Valley is rice of a fine variety. Saffron is cultivated around Pampore (pp. 117-118). Different varieties of fruit like, apple, apricot, walnut, peaches, almonds, cherry and many others are produced all over the Valley. Similarly, different types of trees like poplar, willow, walnut and the magnificent chinar turn the Valley into a veritable feast of greenery and add great variety to its already rich landscape. At heights above 2000 m, maize and millet are the main crops. Due to abundance of forests, timber has been its chief produce; though, of late, logging has considerably slowed down due to the constraints imposed by the necessity to prevent ecological degradation.

Trees like fir, pine, deodar and willow, which thrives in the temperate climate of the Valley, can be found in numerous forests that cover the mountain ranges at the lower altitude. As one approaches the tree line, birch, maple and horse chestnut trees become more predominant. Most of these forests are generally found on the northern slopes as the severe sun and hot winds coming from the plains, make it impossible for these delicate trees to survive on the southern slopes that take the brunt of the heat and the accompanying winds. These slopes are covered with shrubs and wild grass. In the higher reaches, where the climate is no longer suitable for cultivation of maize and millet, the nomadic tribes cultivate buckwheat and Tibetan barley. As the elevation increases, bare rocks and glaciers became predominant. And beyond these, tower the glistening snow peaks that almost touch the vast blue sky.

In 1947, Kashmir valley's only city was Srinagar, the summer capital of the State, situated on both banks of River Jhelum. At that time, its two banks were connected to each other by seven bridges (now there are many more). The connectivity between various

localities in the hinterland over backwaters and canals joining Jhelum with Dal Lake, was provided by numerous smaller bridges and arches. In those days, the foreign tourists, the royalty and the English ruling class lived in the more modern, clean surroundings, having broad roads and well-kept lawns and stately mansions, with fashionable shopping areas catering to their needs. However, bulk of its population of roughly 250,000 lived in the old city in squalid hovels, where many of them made the exquisitely designed colorful shawls that draped the shoulders of the rich and the powerful, while squatting on the floor in dark, dingy and damp rooms. Others worked as small traders or skilled artisan. There were many other towns like Baramulla, Anantnag and Bandipore. Some of these have developed into cities today. Tourist destinations like Pahalgam, Gulmarg, etc, were as popular then as these are today. In villages, the chief vocation of the common masses was agriculture, though today, other occupations like tourism, government service, trade, petty business, etc, have made significant inroads.

Gardens, Lakes, Springs and Meadows

From times immemorial, paeans have been sung to Kashmir's natural beauty. Those who are born there, perhaps, do not appreciate it as much as those coming from outside. The former, having grown up in the environment, take it for granted and the latter, particularly those coming from the scorching plains of India, cannot have enough of it. Even though global warming and ecological degradation have resulted in quite a bit of damage to the Valley's rivers, lakes and *mars*, Kashmir still mesmerises the tourist with its beauty, which is both breathtaking and bewitching.

Mughal Gardens

Mughal rule in Kashmir is synonymous with Mughal gardens.

These magnificent, broad stretches of flower bedecked, green patches were constructed with great aesthetic taste and meticulous planning by Mughal emperors and their governors. These gardens dot the foothills of Zabarwan Mountains, skirting the famous Dal Lake and are incomparable in their beauty, layout, location and charm. Almost all of these have terraced flower beds, towering chinars and fountains located in the centre of the flowing water channels that carry shimmering waters before discharging the same into Dal Lake. For hundreds of years, the local folk and visitors from outside have thronged these gardens to soothe their nerves and for seeking refuge away from the hustle and bustle of city life. As has been mentioned elsewhere in chapter 3, after the annexation of Kashmir by the Mughals in 1586, Emperor Akbar's visits to Kashmir were followed by Shahjahan and Jahangir during their rule, and their lesser ranked, but important officials. The captivating beauty of Kashmir provided an ideal refuge to escape the scorching plains of India in summer.

Pampore and Saffron

Pampore is synonymous with saffron. Situated on the outskirts of Srinagar at a distance 16 km from there on NH IA, it is the home of saffron industry of Kashmir. About 74 per cent of the total annual production of 12,500 kg of saffron (botanical name, *cocus stavia kashmiriana)* is produced in an area of 4,500 hectares spread over 200 villages of Pampore belt. The remaining 26 per cent is produced in parts of Budgam in central Kashmir and in Kishtwar region of Jammu division. Saffron is a dried reddish-purple stigma that is extracted delicately with great diligence from billions of flowers grown in autumn (October/November). It is prized for its medicinal properties and as a coloring ingredient for South Asian cuisine. In ancient times, it was used by the

royalty as a scented salve or emollient. "The streets of Rome were sprinkled with saffron when Nero made his entry into the city."[28] It is believed that saffron was cultivated in a small town, named Walden, a short distance away from London in England, where its cultivation was introduced by a pilgrim from Tripoli. *Rajtarangini* too has recorded a legend about saffron.

According to the legend, a *Naga,* by the name of Takhshaka, once developed some eye ailment. He went to a physician, Waghabhatta, who lived in village Zewan near Pampore. Despite being administered the appropriate medicine, Takhshaka could not be cured. On investigating the cause, Waghabatta found that Takhshaka was a *Naga* (snake), whose poisonous vapours issuing from the mouth, were nullifying the effect of the medicine being applied to his eyes. Waghabhatta, therefore "bound his eyes with a cloth and the *Naga* was restored to health. In his gratitude, the *Naga* gave the physician a bulb of saffron and the cultivation sprang up at Pampore."[29] In the olden days a pilgrimage used to be taken to a pool of water where *Takhshaka Naga* was worshipped at the commencement of the saffron cultivation. So closely is Pampore identified with Saffron that local women sing the following folk song:

"*Yar drayom pompari watae Kong poshan wati rot tattea.*"

(My friend hath taken the pampore road; but was held-up by the saffron flower.)[30]

Of late, the production of saffron has come down appreciably even though it costs roughly ₹ 200,000 per kg. As large tracts of land are sold off at attractive prices to realtors, the cultivable acreage keeps shrinking with every passing year. The Government of India has announced the formation of National Saffron Mission to address all these issues.

Fruits, Trees and Forests of Kashmir

Kashmir is famous for its delicious fruits. Most fruits bear local names: *Tsunth* for Apple, *Tang* for Pear, *Tser* for apricot, *Doon* for walnut, *Aeliche* for wild cherry, *Aer* for plum, *Dachh* for grapes and *Glass* for cherry. According to a survey conducted in 1945, Kashmir Valley grows 113 varieties of apples, 62 of pears, 31 of plum and 14 of cherry. Its temperate climate, abundance of water and four distinctly different seasons provide ideal condition for growing a variety of fruit trees and flowers.

Kashmir is very rich in forests that abound on its mountains and in the valleys. Forests constitute nearly 47 per cent of the state's geographical area. However, in the absence any effective mechanism to save these forests, "approximately 14,359 hectares of forest land had been encroached upon illegally..."[31] Jammu accounts for 9,482 hectares and Kashmir 4,877 hectares of this encroached land.

Among the variety of trees and spruce, the emperor is without doubt, the Chinar, which is both beautiful and majestic. Its size, longevity, thick foliage (that gives perfect shade from sun and shelter against rain) and its rarity makes it the most venerable of the trees in Kashmir. Locally called boony or Oriental Plane (Platanus Orientalis Kashmiriana), it is a deciduous tree that grows to a height of 100 ft. Its magnificent palmate leaves reach a length of 10 inches. Though there is a generally held belief that the tree was introduced in Kashmir by the Mughals, the fact is that its references can be found in ancient Hindu and Buddhist literature and customs. "Etymologically, the word boony is a corrupt form of Sanskrit word 'Bhawani', the name of 'Bhava' (Shiva's) consort. Indeed with its size and cool shade that its thick foliage provides, it can be likened to a benevolent and loving mother," says Rajinder

Raina. Even Lal Ded refers to it in one of her *Vaakhs*:

Kentsan råñ chhay shihij boony,
nerav nyabar shuhul karav.
Kenstan ran chhay bar pyatha boony,
nerav nyabar tŭ zang khĕyav
Kenstan råñ chhai adal tŭ vadal;
Kenstan råñ chhay zadal tshay.

Some have wives like a shady chinar tree,
let us go under it and cool ourselves
some have wives like the bitch at the door,
let us go and get our legs bitten
Some have wives always in confusion,
and some have wives like a leaking thatched roof.

(Rajinder Raina, Praznath, April-September 2012, p. 40)

Its red leaves in autumn make a picture perfect scene as the fading red hue of the setting sun creates an illusion of the tree being on fire. "Its original name is *Boony* and it existed long before the Mughals came to Kashmir. It got its new name Chinar from an Afghan or a Mughal emissary who visited the valley in autumn when the Boony leaves had all turned red. This emissary was so overawed by the grand sight of a huge 'burning' tree in front of him that he exclaimed, *che-nar*, meaning 'Look Fire.' Then, onwards, it came to be called chinar."[32] Its wood is used for the manufacture of furniture and oil-presses. Besides this, willow, poplar, blue pine (its wood makes excellent charcoal and its resin is used for medicinal purposes), silver fir (has durable wood free from knots), Himalayan spruce, birch, maple, beech, hazel, wild oak are also found in the valley. Francois Bernier (see chapter 3) described the forests of the valley thus:

"I saw hundreds of trees plunged into abysses and mouldering

with time; while others were shooting out of the ground and supplying their places."[33]

A large variety of wildlife is found in these forests. Some of the wild animals that can be spotted are, leopard, wild boar, Barasingha (Hangul), black bear, Markhor, red bear, fox, wolf, musk deer, snow leopard and ibex. A great variety of birds can also be found. These are, duck, goose, chakor, monal pheasant, partridge and snipe and many more.

State of Communications in 1947

In 1947, modern means of communications did not exist in the state and these were barely rudimentary. The difficult and rough mountainous terrain further accentuated the problem. In 1950–51, the total road length available in the state was 2,003 km. The only railway line that existed in the State prior to the partition was the few kilometers long line that connected Jammu with Sialkot in the Punjab. There was not even a single fully equipped airfield in the state, though emergency landing strips did exist at Jammu, Srinagar, Gilgit and Chillas, which could only take light planes.

There were only two major roads in the state, though only one of these was all-weather road; the one that connected Rawalpindi in Punjab with Srinagar. Despite the fact that at one point this too passed through the narrow Jhelum gorge, it did provide an easy access to the valley. In fact, it was the main route to the valley from the plains of Punjab and was extensively used for trade and tourism. At Kohala bridge, this 205-km-long road entered within the state boundary, hugging the left bank of the river. From Kohala, it ran north towards Domel, where on the opposite bank of river Jhelum ran the Abbotabad-Muzafarabad road. The main road, with macadamised surface, thence continued to follow Jhelum that took a

sharp turn towards west on its journey to Wullar Lake. From there, it reached Baramulla via Chakoti and Uri. At Baramulla, the terrain became easier and flat as the valley opened up, and this flat stretch continued till Srinagar.

The second major road led from Srinagar to Jammu over a distance of 320 kms, passing mostly through picturesque, though difficult mountainous terrain. For its initial 96 kms it ran over the plain stretch of magnificently straight limbed poplar lined road till lower Munda. Thereafter, the road started its laborious climb over the Pir Panjal Range till the tunnel, which was situated at 4000 m at Banihal. Here, it crossed over to the other side and started descending towards Ramban, and crossed the Chenab River over a narrow bridge, and thence climbed again to Batote. From there, it gently descended towards Udhampur and finally to Jammu.

A number of smaller roads to various places in the valley took off from Srinagar. One of these connected Srinagar with Tangmarg, which was the debussing point for the famous tourist resort of Gulmarg. The other ran on a level stretch between Srinagar and Bandipur. A road originated from Jammu-Srinagar Highway at Anantnag, and moving along the Lidder Valley, reached Pahalgam. An important artery in the north Kashmir passing over Shamshabari Range connected Srinagar with Tangdhar.

In the Jammu region, the most important fair-weather road connected Jammu with Poonch in the north-west, though at many places it was barely jeepable. Enroute, it first touched Akhnur town situated on the banks of River Chenab, then Naushera, Jhangar and Kotli, before reaching Poonch. Poonch itself was connected by a fair-weather road over Haji Pir Pass (2638 m) with Uri on the Rawalpindi-Srinagar road. A few rough and difficult tracks ran northwards from Poonch and Rajouri over the Pir Panjal Range into Kashmir valley.

In the south, tracks also connected Poonch with Mirpur and Kotli, though compared to northern tracks, these were better. The latter two towns were easily accessible from the Punjab plains. The other fair-weather road connected Jammu with Pathankot, where it joined the Indian road system. This 112-km road link that passed through two big villages, namely Samba and Kathua, crossed Ravi (which had no bridge) enroute. This road was the only tenuous link between the State and India at the time of partition.

In the Ladakh region, the most celebrated non-motorable track was the 389-km-long caravan route from Srinagar to Leh. This was used by the Central Asian trading caravans moving between Srinagar and Yarkand in the Sinkiang (Xinjiang) province of China. From Srinagar, this track entered the beautiful valley of Sindh River and then climbed steeply up the saddle at the end of the valley, before crossing the Great Himalayan Range at Zoji La at 3,528 m. A gentle slope beyond Zoji La, took the track down to Dras (second inhabited coldest place in the world) and then to Kargil, which happened to be a *Tehsil* headquarter. From here, the track turned east, reaching Fatu La (4,094 m) over an intervening ridge, before reaching the Indus River near Khalatse (also Khalsi). From here it hugged Indus all along, crossing it by a cantilever bridge, before reaching Leh through a side valley. This route had undergone no change since the period of Mughals. The route was so difficult that, leave alone vehicular traffic, only the sure-footed yak or pony could traverse it.

From Leh, the caravan route continued up north into the Shyok Valley over the high mountain range and continued further up the valley across the Karakoram Range, through Karakoram Pass (5,575 m). After that, the track encountered a gentle slope and thence, following the Yarkand stream, it reached Yarkand town, a distance of 771 kms from Leh. Beyond Leh, there were other extremely difficult and tough tracks. One of these extended to Gartok and Lhasa in Tibet

and another moved southwards over Zanskar Range crossing further over a number of passes, including the Baralachha Pass and finally opening into Kulu Valley of Himachal Pradesh. However, a travel on this route needed pioneering spirit, as this route was too difficult even for the hardy people that traveled on the caravan route. Though it was extremely difficult route, yet it did provide a backdoor entry into Leh from India.

The strategically important route from Srinagar to Gilgit covered a plain stretch till Bandipur, but beyond it, this route was as precarious as the Leh route. Covering a distance of 365 kms, this was the only available route in 1947, to move troop reinforcements, relief and supplies to Gilgit. Beyond Bandipur, the climb started towards the higher reaches of the watershed between the Jhelum and the Kishenganga Rivers, crossing it at Rajdhani Pass (Rajdianghan) at 3,638 m, offering an unparalleled view of the Nanga Parbat from a very close distance. The track then descended into the Kishenganga Valley. After traversing the lush meadows of Gurez, it crossed over to the right bank of Kishenganga River (named after Karishi), before moving up the steep and difficult slopes of the main Himalayan Range. Here, the track bifurcated into two tracks, both eventually crossing the range; one through Kamri Pass, situated at 4,075 m, and the other through Burzil Pass at 4,198 m. After covering some distance, both tracks joined on the far side. Thence, the single track, following the gorge of the Astor River, crossed it over a bridge at Ranghat at a height of 1,158 m. Thereafter, the track reached Bunji, and crossed the Indus by another rickety bridge before moving along Gilgit River to reach Gilgit, without encountering any major obstacles.

The big garrison town of Gilgit was of strategically great significance; not only was it the headquarters of a volatile district, it also connected the State with Kashgar and Sinkiang (Xinjiang)

through another caravan route. This route crossed the Karakoram Range at Mintaka Pass (4,709 m), after going up the gorge of the Hunza River. Gilgit was further connected with Abbotabad and Murree in Pakistan via Chilas. Another route from Gilgit moved eastwards up the Indus Valley, along the Indus River, leaving it only at places where the River ran between high and smooth, but steep granite walls. Here, the track went over the mountain spurs and rejoined the riverside after the river had crossed the difficult terrain. After crossing Skardu enroute, it split into two, with the southern arm joining up with the Leh-Srinagar route near Kargil and the northern arm moving up the Shyok Valley, and finally linking up with Leh-Yarkand route.

In 1947, if the state lacked in road and rail communication, it more than made up the deficiency by a wide network of telegraph stations and wireless network that covered important villages, tourist resorts and even the remote areas, like the Shyok Valley. The wireless communication was controlled by the army authorities except at Naushehra and Gilgit that had civil W/T (wireless/telegraphy) stations. This widespread network of modern communication played a crucial role during the tribal invasion of the state.

Present State of Communications

The state of communications today is a far cry from the situation that existed at the time of Pakistani invasion in 1947. Today, the road network in the state is not only widespread but also modern. Besides, with latest means of maintenance, and a host of facilities catering for the travellers' convenience existing at most places, the road communication in the state has improved considerably.

Many smaller, but important roads have been constructed in the hinterland in all three regions of the state for better connectivity

and easy access. One of these, connecting Bandipur with Kangan via Ghuri and Tulel provides an alternate link between north and central Kashmir.

After partition, the only reliable, and all weather link to the valley from the plains of Punjab, via Muzaffarabad, was lost to Pakistan. This left India with only the more difficult and not-so-reliable road between Pathankot and Srinagar via Jammu, going through the tunnel over the Banihal Pass at 4,000 m, called (NH1A). In 1955, another 3-km-long tunnel was constructed at a lower altitude, which marginally reduced the distance between Jammu and Srinagar by 23 kms. However, it did not end the two major problems that travel on this route entailed; heavy snowfall in the stretch between Banihal and the valley during winter, and landslides at many places throughout the length of the mountainous segment of the route. Both these problems causing the blockage of the road, sometime for days on end, resulting in huge losses of perishable items, cost escalation of goods and freight, and great inconvenience to the passengers.

To overcome this problem, an ambitious plan is under way to develop this highway into a four-lane-all-weather road to link the valley with Jammu. The project, estimated to cost about ₹ 8000 crores, was to begin in 2007 and was expected to be completed by 2010. But it has been delayed due to various reasons. The road is going to be an engineering marvel, with India's longest tunnel connecting Batote with Kud, being constructed enroute. This will obviate the ascent to Patni Top, which gets covered by snow in winter. This will be among 13 tunnels on the entire stretch between Jammu and Srinagar. The other big tunnel, measuring 8.5 km will connect Nowgam with Qazigund. The road will also have 34 bridges and 24 viaducts and reduce the distance between Jammu and Srinagar from 302 kms to approximately 250 kms.

On May 23, 2011, a foundation stone was laid to construct north India's only cable-stayed 592 m long bridge over River Ravi to restore communication to Basohli town in Jammu region, access to which had got restricted due to the construction of Ranjit Sagar Dam. It will provide another route to Kashmir Valley via Basohli, Bani, Bhadarwah, Kishtwar, Chhatroo and Anantnag. The bridge will also connect the state with Himachal and Punjab. A permanent bridge at Ravi will help restore the glory of Basohli, founded by Raja Bhupat Pal in 1635, and known outside for its world famous miniature paintings called 'Basohli School of Painting'.

Another road starting from Pathankot proceeds to Manali and thereafter, crossing the Rohtang Pass, it reaches Upshi, and then culminates at Leh. This road, however, remains blocked for five months in a year due to heavy snowfall and inclement weather. Construction of the Rohtang tunnel, which will connect Manali with Lahaul Spiti, has already started. The tunnel, likely to be completed by middle of 2015, will reduce the traveling time to Leh by four hours and the distance by nearly 50 kms. With its length at 8.8 kms, it is going to be the longest tunnel at such altitude in the world. In fact, there is none above 2,500 m. By all accounts, it will be an ambitious project, to be constructed in hostile environment at an altitude between 3,053 and 3,083 m.

There is another major road between Madhopur (a few kms from Pathankot) and Udhampur via Dhar. Similarly, the western and north-western districts of Poonch and Rajouri are connected to Jammu by another road that runs parallel and not far from LoC. It is an all-weather road touching Akhnur, Rajouri and Poonch.

Within the Pir Panjal Range itself, an all weather road connects Batote, situated on NH1A, to Doda and Kishtwar. Another one starting from Ramban on the NH1A, goes to Mohore,

Gulabhgarh, Budhal; finally ending at Naushehra. Recently, the construction of link between moutainous Kishtwar district with Anantnag, through Sinthan top has been taken up on priority.

Jammu too has extensive network of roads. One road takes off from Dhar and via Basohli, goes to Udhampur. The other one also originates at the same place and ends at Kishtwar, after touching Basohli, Badharwah and Doda. Then there is one connecting Kishtwar with Anantnag in the Valley. In the north-west, one road starts from Domel, passes through Reasi, Kalakote and Rajouri, before reaching Thanamandi.

Mughal Road

About five centuries ago, this route, then a pony track running across the Pir Panjal Range, was used by Emperor Akbar to conquer Kashmir. Starting from Jhelum town, now in Pakistan, it passes through Kotli (in PoK), Thanamandi (near Rajouri), and Chandimarh (in Pir Panjal mountains). From there, one branch goes to Bafliaz (a town in Poonch). The other branch, which is a 89 km stretch, passes through huge mountain barrier, ranging in height between 3400 and 4000 m, till it reaches the apple-rich town of Shopian, across Pir Panjal. The construction of this road started in 2002 and is likely to be completed in 2017. It connects Poonch and Rajouri districts of the State with Kashmir, through an alternate route. The mountain stretch of the road passes through valleys and ridges of pristine beauty, dotted with snow-fed streams, unexplored valleys, meadows that are incomparable for their grandeur and lush velvet greenery. It also passes through Hirpur, the last inhabited place on Kashmir side, which is a wildlife sanctuary and home to Markhor and Himalayan brown bear.[34] From there, the road passes through Pir ki Gali, (named after Pir Baba), the highest point and pass on the road.

There are three interesting places en route that deserve specific mention. Hastvanj derives its name from *hast*, meaning elephant and *vanj* meaning 'to go'. Kalhana, in *Rajtarangini* mentions that once the cruel and barbarian Hun ruler of Kashmir, Mirakhula (see chapter 1), was returning to Kashmir from a campaign in north India, on this route, when an elephant suddenly lost its balance and hurtled down the cliff into a deep gorge. The poor elephant met a ghastly death, shrieking and as it fell. The gruesome sight and painful sound of the unfortunate beast delighted the sadistic king so much that he ordered one hundred of his elephants to be thrown off the precipice in the same manner.

The other interesting place, Noor-i-Chhamb, is situated on Mughal Road near Behramgala village in Panjsaran Valley, at a distance of 45 kms from Poonch city. Surrounded by snow-covered peaks, this beautiful waterfall lies on foothills of Pir Panjal Pass (3,535 m). Waters from Laksar and Kolsar lakes, located at an altitude of 3,962 m near Panjtarimarg in Panjal range, feed this waterfall through a stream. Near Behramgala village, this stream falls from a 30 m high sheer drop, forming a misty waterfall. As the legend goes, this waterfall was constructed for powering a water mill by Pandavas during their exile in these forests. After diverting the water, they dressed a big stone for watermill in nearby Parnai stream. But their project remained incomplete as they left this place after staying here for only one day, for unknown reasons. For centuries thereafter, the water fall went into oblivion. Mughal Emperor Jahangir, during his visit to Kashmir, brought it into limelight. Thirteen times that he visited Kashmir, he made it a point to stay here. When Jahangir visited this place for the first time, he was so enchanted by the beauty of this magnificent waterfall that he named it as *Noor Chhamb* after his beloved wife, Noor Jahan. In due course of time, it changed to Noor-i-Chammb.

According to *Iqbalnama Jahangiri*, in 1627, Jahangir was sick and in a serious condition, while returning to plains from his sojourn to the valley. Keeping in view the deteriorating health of the Emperor, his *hakims* advised him a few days rest here. One day, while resting close to the waterfall, his eyes soon fell upon a beautiful deer. He immediately ordered his best horseman to hunt the deer. The horseman manoeuvered his horse and followed the deer at galloping speed. The deer reached the edge of the waterfall and disappeared. The horseman, unable to control his horse at that speed, fell off the edge of the waterfall into the deep Chhamb below and met a gruesome death. Jahangir, who was already sick, could not bear the shock of seeing his best horseman meeting such cruel fate. Besides, the horseman was the only son of a widow, who wailed plaintively for her dead son. As a consequence, Jahangir's condition worsened.

Noor Jahan, his wife, realising the gravity of the situation, decided to leave for Lahore at the earliest. However, Jahangir died en-route, between Noor-i-Chhamb and Rajouri. Noor Jahan did not want the news of the Emperor's death to leak out, for it would have resulted in a serious succession war among the claimants to the throne. She, therefore, directed that her husband's intestines be removed, in order to preserve the body. Thereafter, the royal caravan journeyed back to Lahore only during night. She got the intestines buried in a *sarai* (inn), located 24 kms from Rajouri, towards Jammu. This place is now called *Chingus*, Persian term for intestines. It was only after reaching Shahadra, near Lahore, that Jahangir's death was announced.

Rail Link to the Valley

About two decades back, it was decided to undertake the construction of railway track between Jammu and Srinagar in two phases; the first phase between Udhampur and Katra was sanctioned

in 1995, and the second phase between Katra and Qazigund in 2002. It was decided to treat this 292-km-long railway line, estimated to cost ₹ 3000 crores, as a national project, with its completion deadline set for 2007.

This ambitious project would test the skill of railway engineers to the limit, even with the availability of most modern scientific know-how. One hundred twenty kms or 41 per cent of its entire length is made up of 20 tunnels, with the longest, the Pir Panjal tunnel, connecting Qazigund in the valley with Banihal in Jammu region, being approximately 11 kms long, with an overburden of 1100 m. This tunnel would be constructed 440 m below the existing Jawahar tunnel, in a region where no habitation or road exists. Therefore, a 67-km approach road had to be constructed to reach the inaccessible area. The great challenge that Qazigund-Katra setion of this railway line poses can be gauged from the fact that out of 129 kms of this section, 103 kms pass through tunnels of varying length. By the middle of 2009, approximately 70 per cent of the work on this tunnel had been completed.

This will be India's longest and one of the world's deepest tunnels, providing all-weather communication between the two regions of the state. By May 2011, 10.4 km of the tunnel had been completed. This will reduce the distance between Qazigund and Banihal to mere 16 kms from the existing 42 kms. The railway line will have to pass over 158 bridges. At places, it passes through weak soil resulting in the newly constructed tunnels collapsing, and at other places the tunnels getting waterlogged. At some places, engineers find it difficult to drill through the hard rock. As one former chief of the celebrated Konkan Railway said, "...the line passes through a geological fault line, which meant that extra care should be taken..."[35] This has resulted in three-fold cost escalation over the original estimate. This galloping escalation occurred as "detailed

survey could not be completed due to highly difficult, inaccessible terrain and adverse situations/conditions in the area."[36]

At places the railway bridges over deep gorges of Chenab River and other smaller mountain streams are as high as Qutab Minar; at other places, even higher than that. One such bridge being constructed between Katra and Dharam sections will have a height of 359 m, which is five times the height of Qutab Minar and 35 m taller than Eiffel Tower. Situated at a distance of 65 kms from Katra, the bridge on river Chenab at Kauri, in Reasi district, will be 1,315 m long. It will consume a whopping 25,000 million tons of steel and will have the distinction of being the world's highest rail bridge. The terrain restrictions had imposed alignment and other difficulties, which resulted in the work being stopped on the project for two and a half years. However, the matter has been resolved by using heavy lift helicopters of Indian Air Force for ferrying heavy equipment to inaccessible areas in order to hasten the project. It is now believed that the project will be completed by the end of 1217. In the meantime, Srinagar-Baramulla and Qazigund-Anantnag sections of the railway line were commissioned in November 2008 and February 2010 respectively, and ever since, are functioning normally.

Notes

1. Fredrick Drew, *The Jammu and Kashmir Territories*, (Stanford, London, 1875), pp. 28–40. Fredrick Drew was a renowned geographer who visited Kashmir in 1875.
2. Dr SN Prasad and Dr Dharam Pal, *Operations in Jammu and Kashmir*, (Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Thompsons Press, New Delhi, 1987).
3. Dr Arthur Neve was born in Brighton, Sussex (England) in 1859. After completing his medical education at Edinburgh University, he joined the Royal Infirmary. In 1882, he went to Kashmir as part of the Church Missionary Society. He wrote several books on Kashmir. After serving in France during World War I, he again came to Kashmir, where he passed away in 1919.
4. *Keys to Kashmir*, Gandhi Memorial College, (Lala Rookh Publications, Srinagar, 1957), p. 94.
5. Prof P Stobdan, downloaded from http://kashmirtimes.com. Prof P Stobdan is Director, Centre for Strategic Affairs and Regional Studies, University of Jammu.

6. Claude Arpi, *Pioneer*, New Delhi, June 7, 2012.
7. Ibid.
8. AGPL (Actual Ground Position Line) is the name given to the imaginary line drawn north towards the glaciated region from Grid Point NJ 9842, in the Siachen Glacier area.
9. H Sender, *The Kashmiri Pandits — The Study of Cultural Choices in North India* (Oxford University Press, 1988).
10. Dr SN Prasad and Dr Dharampal, n. 2.
11. *Keys to Kashmir*, n. 4, p. 29.
12. Downloaded from SikhNet: Source www.dnaindia.com on September 10, 2011.
13. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*: Provincial Series, Kashmir and Jammu, p. 15.
14. Down-loaded from http://Koshur.org, http://iKashmir.net on September 9, 2011.
15. Stanzin Kunzang Angmo, "Ladakh: A Treasure Trove of Medicinal Plants;" *Pioneer*, September 7, 2011.
16. Ibid.
17. *Listening Post* - in military terminology, it implies a place occupied to keep a watch on the enemy activity without being noticed or getting involved in any firefight or skirmish.

    Great Game- The British-Russian struggle to extend their influence over Central Asia and East Turkmeinistan (present day Xinjiang) was, in strategic discourse, referred to as the *Great Game*. Many renowned explorers/travellers/geologists who contributed immensely to exploring this part of the world and helped fill up the blank spots on the maps, were either supported by British or Russian empires. These include MA Stein, Sven Heidin, Sir Francis Younghusband and Nikkolai Przhevalsky. Their expeditions to these forbidden areas too became a part of this intense rivalry.
18. 'Threat in being' means an existing threat that can materialise without much warning or preparation.
19. Prof P Stobdan, downloaded from KPNetwork@yahoogroups.com on August 26, 2009.
20. They are an ancient people who are referred to as Darada in Sanskrit literature. They inhabited the entire region between the Hindu Kush and the frontiers of India. Dr Leitner who visited the region in 1886, writes, "Whether we judge from language or from physiognomy, the conclusion is inevitable that the Dards are an Aryan race." *Keys to Kashmir*, p 35. They were Buddhist before most of them converted to Islam. Dards are also sometimes referred to as Drokpas or Brogpas. Nearly 1,000 of them, still professing Buddhist faith, live in Darchik in Kargil District of the State and speak a language very akin to Vedic Sanskrit. They are said to possess pure Indo-Aryan features. Perhaps; Dards and Brokpas are racially the same people. However, scholars differ on this. Brokpas, they say, are Shins (Shina speaking people) who have migrated to Ladakh from Chillas. Shina is a Dardic language. Some say they are descendants of the remnants of Alexander's army that stayed on in the area after Alexander left. Their language is akin to Vedic speech anyway, but they are mostly Muslims.
21. In earliest official records of Dogra rulers, the nomenclature of northern areas annexed by Maharaja Gulab Siangh was Riyasat-e-Jammu-wa-Kashmir-wa-Ladakh-wa-Tibbet ha. "ha" is plural sign in Farsi. Hence it means "Tibbets", which is interpreted as present day Gilgit, and Baltistan, locally called Balawaristan.
22. Ali Engineer Rinchen, *Pioneer*, July 26, 2010,

23. Mahroof Raza, *USI Journal*, July-Sept 2006, p. 389.
24. "It is a Persian couplet engraved in Diwan-e-Aam of Red Fort, Delhi, built by Shah Jahan. But Persian romantic poets attributed it to Kashmir because Kashmir was the only place similar to climate of Tehran and Central Asia or Afghanistan (non-tropical) with mild summer but plentiful of wetness, vegetation, greenery and spectacular flora and fauna". Dr KN Pandita.
25. Quoted by Joseph Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir*.
26. A typical water body, peculiar to Kashmir, with its whole surface covered by microscopic plants called plankton.
27. "The couplet in question is the opening (*matla'*) of a panygeric (*qasida*) composed by a Persian poet named Urfi at the court of Akbar, the Mughal Emperor, when he accompanied the royal entourage on a visit to Kashmir. Urfi is generally considered a philosopher-poet, and has been the author of many well-known qasidas". Dr KN Pandita.
28. Keys to Kashmir, n. 4, p. 133.
29. Ibid. p. 134.
30. Ibid. p. 163.
31. Statement of Mian Altaf Ahmad during his press conference held in Jammu: reported by *Pioneer* of January 1, 2011.
32. Capt SK Tikoo (retd) in a personal communication to the author.
33. Keys to Kashmir, n. 4, p. 96.
34. The construction of the road was objected to by various NGOs, who felt that such construction activity and use of the road thereafter, will spell doom for the wild life in general and the precious endangered species in particular. It was only after the Supreme Court cleared the project that the work could recommence.
35. Statement made by R. Velu, the Minister of State for Railways in Parliament: quoted by K Narayan Kumar in *Mint* of September, 11/12 2007.
36. Ibid.

6

KASHMIRI PANDITS

Saraswati mahabhage vidye kamala locane/
Viswarupi visalaksi vidyam dehi saraswati //

("O highly exalted Goddess of Learning, O lotus-eyed Saraswati, O you, who exists in various forms, and who has large eyes, grant us the boon of knowledge.")

The above hymn is recited in praise of the Goddess of Knowledge, Saraswati, whose other name is Sharda Devi. The ancient temple of Sharada is located in PoK's Neelam Valley (Kishenganga Valley), at a distance of approximately 100 kms from Baramulla and about 76 kms inside the LoC. The temple takes its name from village Shardi located near the confluence of Kishenganga and Madhumati Rivers. After the occupation of this area by Pakistan in 1947, piligrimage to this sacred place was stopped.

The Saraswat Brahmans of Kashmir, also known as Kashmiri Pandits, are the original inhabitants of the Valley of Kashmir, with a history of more than 5000 years, dating back beyond the *Neelmat* era, almost contemporaneous to the Vedic civilisation of India. Ancestors of Kashmiri Pandits lived on the banks of the mighty Saraswati River which flowed in the north-west region of India (see chapter 1). Subsequent to its drying up around 1900 BCE, these people moved

north and found shelter in Kashmir Valley. This period, perhaps, coincided with the time when Satisar was drained of its water. Due to a very conducive environment during the reign of Hindu kings in the first two millennia after they settled in Kashmir, these people developed a distinct literary culture that survives to the present day. Originally, they were and continue to be known as 'Bhattas'. The term "Bhatta is derived from ancient Sanskrit (Prakrit) name *bhartri*, which means doctor, scholar or intellectual."[1] Pandit too means a learned person. In *Bahristan-e-Shahi*, the author says that the local population held Kashmiri Brahmans in high esteem. In fact; the foreign clerics would tell the locals that the Muslim *ulema* (clerics) are actually Muslim-Brahmans.

When did Bhattas come to be known as Kashmiri Pandits? The answer to this question seems to be shrouded in mystery because such change of nomenclature is quite uncommon among Indian communities. It is possible that living in Kashmir, surrounded on all sides by huge mountains, with few means of communication, enforced on them a certain degree of isolation. This isolation, perhaps, enabled Kashmiri Brahmans to develop certain distinctive characteristics in physical appearance, language, culture, religion, traditions, etc. This was quite in contrast to other communities in the plains of India, who could easily move from one place to other. It appears that Kashmiri Brahmans' distinctive culture and appearance, differentiated them from people living in rest of India. Since they migrated in large numbers from Kashmir to escape persecution in the valley after the arrival of Islam there in fourteenth century, they came to be looked at as a distinctive ethnic group, with many of their rituals and traditions different from the Brahmans of the plains. That, perhaps, resulted in the change of their nomenclature from Bhattas to Kashmiri Pandits, most likely during the Mughal period.

Nevertheless, it will not be out of place to refer to the celebrated and oft quoted story of a poor Kashmiri Bhatta by the name of Jai Ram

Bhan, who lived in the valley during the reign of Mughal Emperor, Mohammad Shah (1719–1747 CE). His widowed mother helped run the household with her own meager income by working as a maid in the house of an astrologer, known locally as *Jotshi*. This astrologer had predicted a bright and rich future for Jai Ram Bhan. Many years later Jai Ram migrated to Delhi to look for some means of livelihood. However, despite trying hard, he could not find any work. One day, frustrated with his state, he sat near the entrance of the palace just wondering what to do next. Not having anything to do particularly, he started counting the number of people going in and coming out of the palace. From then on, in the absence of any worthwhile preoccupation, this then became his routine pastime.

One day a favourite courtesan of the king went missing. Jai Ram made quick calculation and concluded that the missing person would be inside the palace. A thorough search based on his assessment proved him to be right. The Mughal emperor was so impressed by Jai Ram's ability that he employed the latter in his palace. Taking advantage of the Emperor's benevolence, Jai Ram asked to be granted another favour. He wanted Saraswat Brahmans to be set apart from other Brahmans of the country. His wish was granted and the honorific title, *Pandit*, as a prefix to Kashmiri Saraswat Brahmans was bestowed on the community. As Bansi Pandit writes, "initially this Pandit title was meant for Kashmiri Saraswat Brahmans connected with the Mughals, but later, it was used by all Kashmiri Brahmans."[2] "Thus the Kashmiri Pandit took his birth in his modern shape, though till then the name Kashmiri Pandit was not coined to describe this community which was described as *Bhatta*. Even now a Kashmiri Pandit at home describes himself as a *Bhatta* and it is by this term that he is described by others in Kashmir."[3]

Recent research, however, points out a much earlier use of the term 'Kashmiri Pandit' for Bhattas of Kashmir, though it needs to be corroborated by other independent research scholars. According to

Dr Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani, it was Lama Taranath who used this term much earlier. In his personal communication to the author, Dr Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani writes, "Taranath was the author of the famous work *History of Buddhism in India*. He wrote it in 1608.Taranath was a Tibetan and was born with the Tibetan name Kun-dga-sñin-po. He is, however, best known as Lama Taranath — the name that he got on his ordainment as a Lama. In his work, he has throughout used the term *Kache Pachen* for Kashmiri Brahmins. It has been translated as 'Kashmiri Panditas' by his translators."

During Zain-ul-Abidin's rule in Kashmir, when he introduced Persian as the official court language, Brahmans had to quickly devise a way to keep Sanskrit alive. They decided to train the eldest son of the eldest daughter to be a Sanskrit scholar so that he could take on the responsibilities of looking after the religious needs of the family. He thus became a *purohit* (priest). Such *purohits* came to be known as *Bachibhat*, meaning those who study *Bhasha* (language), i.e., Sanskrit. Others were called *Karkun*, derived from Persian word *Karinda*, which roughly translates into 'an educated government employee'. In due course of time, this arrangement became a tradition in the Brahman families. Needless to say, this division was indirectly forced on the Brahmans, as they had to devise ingenious ways of ensuring preservation of their language, religion and cultural heritage.

A few words about the *Sharda* script will be in order. It is an ancient western Himalayan script, which evolved from the *Brahmi* script, used in the northwestern region sometime in the 9th century. It was a popular language and served as a link language among the peoples of north-western region of ancient Kashmir. Being akin and close to Hindi, people in Kashmir used it till the arrival of Nastaliq (variation of Persian script). Before the advent of Islam, Kashmiri language was written in Sharda script. As Sharda had a wide usage

during that period, accounts of various dynasties, including those of Hindu Shahi dynasty of Kabul, Ohind and Gilgit and legends of Mahmud of Ghazni were also written in Sharda script. The original Sharda script, which was in vogue in Kashmir till later part of Sultans of Kashmir, was found most suited for Kashmiri expressions. However, after conversion of nearly the entire population of Kashmir to Islam, Sharda script lost its dominance as foreign invaders introduced Persian language in their administration.

It seems that all Kashmiri Pandits, being Shaivites, were Kauls, a name derived from 'Mahakaul', one of the many names of Shiva. During the Mughal and Sikh rule in Kashmir, nicknames came to be associated with all families to differentiate between them. The nicknames given to or adopted by a family reflected things like the family's profession/occupation, religious, official or academic epithet/locality where the family lived/peculiar circumstance or incident/abnormal physique or temperament. Over a period of time these nicknames got so deeply and permanently associated with the family name that these evolved into surnames. Today, Kashmiri Pandits are believed to have over 700 different surnames.

Some of the Kashmiri Pandit surnames reflect a deep-rooted sense of Kashmiri humour that the Pandit did not give up even in the most trying circumstances. While others reflect their innate sense of ingenuity. Though Hazlitt calls a nickname as the hardest stone that the devil can throw at a man, yet Kashmiris love their nicknames and continue to devise new ones based on ordinary everyday happenings and circumstances. Even Kalhana devotes some space in the *Rajtarangini* to this unusual fondness for nicknames among Kashmiris. It sticks to a person till as long as he is alive, and on most occasions, it even survives him/her. Following oft quoted example illustrates how a nickname associated with a family changed its form but never left it, finally becoming its surname.

"...For instance a man named Wasdev had a mulberry tree (tul) growing in his courtyard. Therefore, he was called Wasdev Tul. He, in order to get rid of the nickname, cut down the tree. But a *mund* (trunk) remained and people began to call him Wasdev Mund. He then removed the trunk of the tree, but its removal resulted in a *khud* (depression) and henceforth people called him Wasudev Khud. He then filled up the depression but the ground became a *Teng* (mound) and he was called thereupon Wasdev Teng. Thus exasperated he gave up any further attempt to remove the cause of his nickname and it continued to be *teng* which is now attached to the names of his descendants."[4]

That Kashmiri Pandits too imbibed some of the prejudices of the so-called Brahmanical superiority is evident from some of the incidents recorded in history. Treatment of '*Lejibhatta*' is one of them. The term refers to those of their community (numbering about 50 families), who would disguise themselves as Muslims to escape ruthless persecution at the hands Afghan rulers. After putting on the disguise, they used to cook their food in earthen pots, which they would hide in hay stacks or thick leaves of trees during the day. Thus, having ensured their survival in difficult times, they would come back to the Pandit fold, once the Afghans were gone and persecution had subsided. Rather than being welcomed back to the fold they were derogatorily called '*Lejibhatta*' (meaning Pandits of the earthen pot). Even as late as 1937, the *Purohits* raised a hue and cry when a wealthy person's son among these people (Lejibhattas) distributed *prasada* after a *mahayagya*. They called the *prasada* as having been desecrated by the touch of this boy, despite the fact that the *Purohit* class, called *Buhru*, was itself not treated fairly.

Being literate and proficient in the official language of the rulers; be it Sanskrit, Persian, or English, many kings found it useful to utilise the Kashmiri Pandits' talent in administering their states.

During Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin's period, Kashmiri Pandits came to occupy important positions in his court after he had succeeded to some extent in bringing them back from outside the state, where they had fled during Sikander's persecution.

Kashmiri Pandits' association with Afghan kings at Kabul is also well-known. Nanda Ram Tikoo had joined the services of the Prime Minister, Wafadar Khan, during the reign of Durrani King, Shah Zaman (1793–1800). By dint of his competence, loyalty and hard work he rose to the position of *Diwan* of Kabul.

Pandit Birbal Dhar's role, alongwith that of Mirza Pandit Dhar, in ending the cruel Afghan rule has been mentioned in chapter-3. Whereas the former showed exemplary courage and made tremendous sacrifice in persuading the Sikhs to annex Kashmir, the latter did so by standing up to the Afghan governor at a particularly difficult period. He then became the first *Peshkar* of Moti Ram, the first Governor of Kashmir appointed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. During this period, all official work was carried out in Persian. It was the job of a *Peshkar* to translate the Governor's orders into Persian. *Peshkar* also appointed his own *Ahalkar* to run the administration.

Though illiterate himself, Maharaja Ranjit Singh had filled a number of positions in his administration with capable and qualified people from various religions, other than his own. Among these were Muslims, French, Germans, Americans and Kashmiri Pandits. His army boasted of French Generals like Allard, Ventura and Avitabile and Germans like Steinbach and an American, named Gardener. Kashmiri Pandits were also prominently placed at the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Kashmiri Pandit's association with Maharaja Ranjit Singh starts with Pandit Ganga Ram, who was instrumental in getting

many talented Kashmiri Pandits appointed at Maharaja's court. Son of Pandit Kishan Das (belonging to Rainawari), who had migrated out of the valley during the cruel Afghan rule, Ganga Ram had distinguished himself in the Court of Maratha warrior, Mahadji Scindia, during his military campaigns. The French military advisors of Mahadji were so impressed by Ganga Ram that Mahadji entrusted the latter with many sensitive political missions. In all these assignments, Ganga Ram distinguished himself by his skill, honesty and loyalty. His association with the Scindias came to an end when the grand nephew of Mahadji Scindia, Daulat Rao, began his campaign against the British. Ganga Ram quietly shifted to Sitaram Bazar in Delhi, where he purchased a house for ₹ 1,100.

When Ranjit Singh consolidated his position in Lahore, Ganga Ram's name was recommended to him for inclusion among his administrators, who would help him to run the affairs of his fledgeling empire. In 1813, Maharaja Ranjit Singh summoned him to Lahore. Pandit Ganga Ram, on reaching the palace presented the Maharaja with a pitcher of *Ganga Jal* (Holy water from River Ganga). In return, the Maharaja handed him his own royal seal, which Ganga Ram was authorised to use as the head of military office. He was comfortably settled in Kashmiri Mohalla, Lahore. "Ganga Ram obtained considerable power and position, when he impressed the Maharaja by his sheer ability, diligence and knowledge."[5]

In 1821, Ganga Ram was made the Governor of Gujrat district of Punjab, where he developed *Akbari* system of accounting. It was through him that many Kashmiri Pandits became part of the Lahore *Durbar*. Prominent among these were, Raja Dina Nath Madan, who was a member of the council of ministers, and his son, Dewan Amar Nath Madan, who wrote *Zafar Nama*. Other prominent Kashmiri Pandits included the two sons of Ganga Ram; Ayudhya Prasad and Lachman Prasad, the former being an adopted son of Ganga

Ram. The two brothers, with the title of *Dewan*, were paymasters at Lahore and Peshawar respectively. Being excellent horsemen, both brothers would accompany the Maharaja's army during their deep incursions into Pashtuns heartland in Afghanistan, taking care of the expenditure incurred, as also disbursing money to bribe and neutralise the hostile Pathan tribes. Being adept at many languages, they acted as the Maharaja's interpreters also.

After the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Kashmiri Pandits continued to occupy influential positions during the British rule that inevitably followed. It speaks volumes of their survival skills, due to which they emerged unscathed through the chaos of the war of succession that followed Maharaja Ranjit Singh's death. The British found the Kashmiri Pandits more cosmopolitan in outlook and from a completely different background than the ruling elites of the Maharaja. As a result of this new equation between the British and Pandits, the latter came to occupy important positions after the events of 1857, particularly in the Punjab and Awadh. The most prominent Pandits during this period were Dewan Ganga Ram, Pandits Daya Ram, Hari Ram, Gopi Nath, Ram Kishen and Ganga Bishen.

Despite this cosmopolitan outlook, some Kashmiri Pandits did suffer from the conceit of Brahamanical superiority. As late as late nineteenth century, they would refuse to touch a football, as it was made of leather. Likewise, they would not take part in sports activity, as that would lead to their growing muscles, indicating their having performed physical work; derogatory for the twice born. When Tyndale Biscoe asked the Brahman boys in his school for their reasons for not playing football or taking part in athletics, the boys replied, "If we play football, or row, etc., we shall grow muscles on our bodies, and then we shall become low-caste folk like the boatmen and coolies. Moreover, if we play games, we shall have to run about and be energetic, and people will laugh at us, for gentlemen must not hurry."[6] Biscoe faced great resistance when he introduced game

of football in his school, as the boys said, "We cannot kick this ball, for it is an unholy ball and we are holy Brahmans."[7] However, it is also interesting to note the progressive outlook of Pandits, around the time of this incident in 1891. Kashmiri Pandits were the first in the valley to take to modern education. In fact, "There were only 250 scholars in Kashmir and all of them were Pandits."[8]

Religion

Worship of Shiva in Kashmir dates back to remote times. The earliest system or form of Shaivism prevalent in the Valley was *Pashupata*. Its concept revolved around that of *Pati* or the Ultimate Reality, Shiva, *Pasha,* meaning fetters or bonds of ignorance and its variant *Pashu* or the fettered individual. The origin of this sect being too remote in time, it is impossible to pinpoint when exactly it come into existence. However, the *Mahabharata* clearly refers to it as a very ancient form of Shaivism. "It was an Agamic philosophy, dualistic in nature," says Dr Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani.

Non-dual or monistic Shaivism, also known as Kashmir Shaivism or Trika, evolved in the ninth century. This happened when its first seminal text, the *Shiva Sutras,* is said to have been revealed to Vasugupta. As a result, Hindus of Kashmir became the progenitors of *Shakht* and Shaivite monism. Their religious philosophy springs from Shaivism, also known as *Trika Shastra*, the philosophy of the triad (*Trika*), Shiva, Shakti and Nara (individual self). The fundamental principle of this philosophy rests on three-fold existence; *Shiva* (the Ultimate Reality or Supreme Lord), *Shakti* (the universal energy) and *Nara* (the individual self). According to this philosophy, an individual's divine nature gets shrouded by 'Maya', his intrinsic ignorance, which wraps him up in a perpetual bondage and prevents him from realising the divine truth, that he is no different from its Shiva. Trika philosophy endeavours to obliterate this ignorance and enables a human being to realise his true divine nature.

According to a noted Historian, RC Majumdar, "The province of Kashmir in the far north of India produced in the 9th and succeeding centuries, a number of teachers who are reckoned among the greatest exponents of the Shaiva doctrine and philosophy."[9] This religion, popularly called Kashmiri Shaivism, reached its zenith between 10th and 11th century, through the philosophy of Abhinavgupta and Kshemaraja. Its origins, however, could be traced to a school of philosophy that originated in the high Himalayas, circa 400 BCE. History and tradition records Tryambakaditya, a disciple of sage Durvasas, as the first propagator of this unique philosophy. But it was his 16th descendent, Sangamaditya, who settled in Kashmir valley around 800 CE, and actually turned this philosophy into a people's religion and made it enormously popular. Up to this period, only a father could initiate a son into Shaivism. Subsequently, his fourth descendent, Somananda is credited with the formulations of basic doctrines of monistic Shaivism, which he culled from the relevant scriptures. These doctrines were incorporated in '*Shivadhristi*', the first systematic work on the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism, written by Somananda. Over a period of time, this philosophy was periodically refined by great sages and masters like Vasugupta, Kallata, Utpaladev and Abhinavgupta. After Somananda, the initiation into Shaivism took place from master to disciple.

Trika literature can be divided into three categories, viz, *Agma Shastra*, *Spanda Shastra* and the *Pratyabhijna Shastra*. Pratyabhijina Shastra deals with unity of self with the universal consciousness. Spanda Shastra was presented in Kashmir by Vasugupta (860–925 CE) in his famous treatise, *Shiva Sutras*; one of the most sacred scriptures of Kasmir Shaivism. This Shastra explains the "extrovertive and introvertive divine volition of God, which is responsible for the creation and dissolution of the manifest world."[10] Kashmir Shaivism emphasises that one's spiritual freedom (*moksha* or *mukti*) can only be attained by identifying completely with Shiva, the Supreme Lord.

In a way, this philosophy develops non-dualism by synthesising pluralism, dualism and the Buddhist doctrine of *Shuniya* (void). It is devoid of any restrictions imposed by caste, creed, colour or gender. It lays emphasis on practicing religion rather than theorising and debating on its theological aspects. According to its basic tenets, Shaivism does not recommend renunciation. On the other hand, it recommends an active life of a house-holder. It does not even lay emphasis on outward symbols of religiosity, like saffron robes, matted hair, ash covered body or applying a *Tilak* mark on their foreheads. It recognises the essence of worldly life; but at the same time, recommends its harmonising with spiritual pursuit. From 9th century onwards, Shaivism defined the Kashmiri Pandit faith. Almost all its religious life revolves around its dynamic philosophy.

The influence of this unique religious philosophy has had deep impact on the Kashmiri Pandits' world view and his culture and traditions. No aspect of his life has been left untouched by it. As Dr Subhash Kak says, "The rite of Shaivism was responsible for the progress in all sciences and arts. It helped them to cultivate a scientific and rational attitude to life. It is this philosophy that helped them to bear the brunt of foreign invasion and fierce onslaught of the Muslims from thirteenth century onwards. It became the basis of the *Tantric* religion, which was the practical and ritualistic side of this religion."[11]

In keeping with their basic philosophy, all religious practices of Kashmiri Pandits emanate from their worship centred on Shiva and *Shakti*. According to them, all other deities worshipped in the traditional Hindu pantheon are also various manifestations of *Shiva* and *Shakti*. That is why there are numerous shrines in Kashmir devoted to *Shiva* and *Shakti*.

The Kashmiri Pandit's approach to the world is largely shaped by the central concept of their religious tradition, Kashmir Shaivism,

deeply influenced by the *Tantric* thought, which visualises human body as a microcosm of the universe and stresses on looking for divinity within the person. According to this central concept, the objective world is a manifestation of Shiva and, therefore, celebration of beauty and nature is a part of their religious tradition.

Doing *pooja* (*preypuin* in Kashmiri) on all religious festivals, birthdays and other important occasions is a traditionally accepted practice. Preparing *taher*[12] on such occasions and also on Tuesdays and Saturdays, is again a well established practice. On such occasions, after offering *taher* to the house deity, some of it is placed on a specially chosen place, such as an attic for feeding birds and animals. Another tradition being followed from times immemorial involves leaving behind a handful of food at the start of a meal, as *hyun meth* (morsel for dog) for feeding stray dogs. This indicates the Kashmiri Pandits' concern of living in harmony with other creatures of God. *Taher* is also made on other happy occasions like birth of child, school graduation, getting employment, finding a suitable match for a son/daughter and even recovery from illness. In some cases, the ritual is repeated on same days, year after year.

Observing fast (*vrat*) on many occasions throughout the year is another Kasmiri Pandit tradition. Some observe fast every month on *Amavasya, Puranmashi, Ekadashi* and *Ashtmi*. Some even observe fast on occasions like *Chandan Shashthi, Bhimsen Ekadashi, Kali Ashtami, Shiva Chaturdashi*, and *Kumar Shashthi*, etc. Besides these, observing fast on the anniversaries of ancestors and sages and Rishis is also a well established practice among Kashmiri Pandits.

Use of water, milk, curd, flowers, rice, *tikka*, fruit, and fresh grass (in some cases) during *preypiun* is a common practice. On some occasions, food is offered to ghosts and goblins. On these occasions, non-vegetarian delicacies are prepared and offered to propitiate these ghosts and goblins. Walnuts are also an essential ingredient of *preypiun*, be it during an important festival

like *Shivratri* (where it is, perhaps, the most important ingredient of the ritual), *zarkasay* (first tonsure of the boy), *Mekhal* (sacred thread ceremony), marriage and even the *anteshti* (the last rites). Most texts are silent on the significance of the use of walnuts during these rituals. One can only surmise that, perhaps, because walnuts can easily be broken into four distinct parts, representing the four *Psashrathas,* (the four goals of existence), *Dharma* (duty), *Artha* (wealth), *Kama* (gratification of desire) and *Moksha* (final emancipation).

Kashmiri Pandits have produced numerous saints and sages who have influenced and enriched their religious thought. Most important of these was Laleshwari, whose *vaakhs* continue to inspire and guide the community even today. A brief description of the saint is given below:

Lalleshwari (Lal Ded) (1335–1376 CE)

Lalleshwari, lovingly called Lalla Ded by Kashmiris, was born at Pandrethan, near Srinagar, in Kashmir, over 600 years ago. She was born in most critical and turbulent times, when the indigenous beliefs and the alien value systems were clashing ominously with the advent of Islam into the valley. She was married at an early age as was the custom those days. However, disillusionment soon set in, as her in-laws ill-treated her. Consequently, she gave up all worldly pursuits and found her guru in Sidh Srikanth, who initiated her into Shaivism. It is also possible that she did study a wide range of the seminal texts of Kashmir Shaivism. Soon thereafter, she experienced divine bliss and started reciting *vaakhs* in Kashmiri language, that manifested her deep spiritual experiences. As time went by, her *vaakhs* became more intensely laden with her anguished outpourings, reflecting her profound mystical insight into reality and deep understanding of human surroundings. Her *vaakhs* became a mirror of her compassionate vision for the spiritual liberation of mankind through Shaivic world-view. "Through her simple but

spontaneous utterances she attunes our mind to the presence of the divine, as the one consciousness pervading the whole universe."[13] It appears that she was aware of the profound effect her *vaakhs* had on the minds of the people, as one of her most poignant *vaakhs* mentions:

"Dress yourself in the clothes of knowledge
And on your heart inscribe what Lalla said in verse
For through meditation on sacred symbol, Om,
Lalla became absorbed in the light of consciousness
And thus she overcame the fear of death."

For her, the whole universe represented consciousness, vibrating at every level and in every atom. She played a remarkable role in saving the indigenous culture from collapsing and ensured its continuity by conveying the essence of Kashmiri Shaivism to masses, in their own natural tongue. Lal Ded had a keen intellect, sharp observation and a clear expression, which she used effectively to present a vivid account of her experiences, while seeking the truth. She graphically describes the phenomenon of experiencing an intense ecstasy while synchronising the energies of the physical body with that of the nature, in various *vaakhs*, thus:

"*Neerith gachann, teelith evaan*
lall bo paaniiy dayee chas"

("I transform myself into vibrational (energy) form, and through it I travel into the cosmos and then come back to my physical form again. Lo! I am the embodiment of the Lord.")

"Dam dam man omkaar pranvoom
Paniiye paraan paaniiye bozaan"

("I recited the blissful word *Omkaar* with such zeal that it created an ecstasy of bliss.")

"Dammaa dam kormas daman haalaiy
Pkazlyome deep ta nanaiyam zaat."

("On breathing at ease with complete rhythm of the word,
I trained my mind to enter into the visionary gleam and realised
the essence of my spirit.")

"Ajapaa gaayatri hamsa hamsa zapith"

("While indulging in meditation, take deep breaths and
pay close attention to your exhaling and inhaling,
in a calm and composed manner.")

In the above *vaakh*, Lalla is urging the *Sadhak* to focus on '*soo*' and '*ham*' sounds produced during deep breathing. These sounds produce energy levels in wave form which help achieve a divine bliss.

By practising meditation in the manner as done by Lal Ded, it is possible to realise the merger of one's spirit with the infinite. These *vaakhs* give an insight into her spiritual attainment.

"Lalleshwari was not the first *Yogini* of the Kashmir Shaivism. Others, like Keyuravati, Madanika and Kalyanika before her, were such adepts of the 'Doctrine of the Krama' school of philosophy, that they imparted its knowledge to famed aspirants like, Yogaraja, Bhanuka and Eraka, who in turn, took this philosophy down south into the Chola empire."[14] But, undoubtedly, she was Kashmir's greatest saint mystic. Her *vaakhs*, which ooze spirituality and practical emotions, are a happy blend of spirituality and poetic mysticism, which have immortalised her. In these, we hear the first heart beat of Kashmiri poetry. "Her four-line verses were crisp and aphoristic and easy for common Kashmiri to memorise. The imagery of her poetry was taken from everyday life of Kashmiri Pandits."[15] These have retained their freshness and purity to this day. She was a symbol of the continuity of 5000 years of Kashmir's civilisational ethos. As a tradition, all Kashmiri Pandit music functions begin with *Lalla Vaakhs*.

Towards the end of her short life she became a wandering mystic giving expression to the universal truths. She eulogised the path of *Yoga* for achieving *Moksha*, attracting followers from both, Hindu and Muslim faiths. During her life time, she became a saint, mystic, a poet and a *Yogini*, all rolled into one. Rajanaka Bhaskaṛa penned down 60 of her *Vaakhs* for the first time in Sharda and translated them into Sanskrit in the eighteenth century.

"She bequeathed her legacy of spiritualism, ascetism and religious tolerance to the younger saint Nunda Rishi, who admired her as an *Avatar*."[16]

Kashmir's Contribution to Indian Literature and Fine Arts

"For upward of 2000 years, Kashmir has been the house of Sanskrit literature and from this small valley they have issued masterpieces of history, poetry, romance, fable and philosophy."[17]

Kashmir's secluded location in a bowl-shaped valley, surrounded by mighty Himalayan ranges, located not too far away from the hot and humid plains of India, its temperate climate, enchanting beauty and calm environment have inspired numerous saints and sages, historians and philosophers, litterateurs and writers to ponder over the mysteries of life. Kashmir and its people were fortunate enough to practice and experience the theories and rituals of some major religions of the world, eg., Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. Despite the depredations caused by the Islamic onslaught on the local Hindus over a long period of time, it could not prevent the synthesis between Hinduism's Shaivaic philosophy, Brahmanical quest for the unknown, Buddhism's search for truth and the essential fundamentals of Islam's *Sufi* cult, from flourishing in the Valley. This synthesis created a legion of people who vigorously followed intellectual pursuits in their respective domains, like arts, literature, theology, religion, culture, history, science, etc. Kashmir's

philosophers, historians, saints and sages contributed immensely to the Indian culture and philosophy. It is believed that the only manuscript of *Pippalda,* a version of *Atharaveda*, was found in Kashmir. As is well known, Buddhism travelled to China and many other places in southeast Asia from here and carried with it Kashmir's own philosophical hue. This couldn't be better summed up than to quote the following:

"Benaras and Kashmir are the two great seats of Hindu sciences. It is Kashmir that has produced the greatest historians, poets and Philosophers."[18]

History

Kashmir's contribution to Indian historiography is unique. Whereas Bana's *Harsacharita* can be classified as a novel rather than history, or for that matter, Hemchandra's *Kumarapala Carits* (1088–1172 CE) as more of a grammar than a history, it is the work of Kalhana, Shrivara, Jonaraja and Shuka, which can truly be termed as genuine works of history. It is Kalhana's *Rajtarangini* that throws light on the political, economic and cultural life of those times. It is one of the rare accounts of the history of that period, available anywhere in the world. His contribution is particularly valuable, because despite a huge body of existing literature, very little of actual history is chronicled. In fact, in the entire period dominated by Sanskrit literature, no writer can seriously be considered a historian. Kalhana's *Rajtarangini* contains 8,000 verses classified under eight *Tarangas* (waves). It is a monumental piece of work in the Sanskrit literature and no Indian historical work can even remotely be compared to it. Kalhana was a poet-seer (*Kavi*) whose *Rajtarangini* is not merely a serious contribution to history but also an outstanding work of literature. The entire concept of Kalhana's work can be summarised in his own words, "Worthy of obeisance is that indefinable virtue of good poets which is superior (in sweetness and immortality) to a

stream of nectar, and whereby they preserve their own bodies of glory as well as those of others." Elaborating further, he says, "If a poet can realise with his genius, things which everybody cannot comprehend, what other indication is wanted that he has the divine sight."

Kalhana wrote *Rajtarangini* in the metrical verse. He began writing it in Saka 1070, corresponding to 'Laukikta' era 4224, or 1148 CE and finished it in 4225 or 1149 CE. Kalhana's eye for topographical detail and his accurate description of the events helps the reader to feel the local milieu of that era. His dispassionate account, unbiased approach to his work, and the high standards that he set for himself can be assessed by what he himself wrote:

"That noble-minded (poet) is alone worthy of praise whose word, like that of a judge, keeps free from love or hatred in relating the facts of the case."

Other historian of repute includes Jalahana, who lived during the rule of King Alankara. He recorded events during the reign of Somapala, King of Rajapuri, in his work titled *Somapala Vilasa*. Then there was Shambu, whose *Rajendra Karanapura* recorded the tumultuous events during King Harsha's rule. In addition to these, there were Jonaraja, who updated the *Rajtarangini* till 1470, and Shrivara, who added four more chapters, covering the events between 1459 and 1486 (end of Zain-ul-Abidin's rule). They were followed by Shuka, who further updated it till the annexation of Kashmir by Mughals in 1586, and Birbal Kachroo, who covered the Mughal and Afghan rule. Another historian of note during this period was Prajna Bhatta, whose *Rajvalipataka* gave a historical account of Kashmir from the time of Zain-ul-Abidin till it became part of Mughal empire under Akbar in 1586.

In the modern era, historians like A Kaul, Gwash Lal, and PN Kaul left their imprint. The last two wrote *Tasvir-e-Kashmir* (Picture of Kashmir) and *Buddhism in Kashmir*, respectively.

Literature

A large body of literature from the Vedic period did bear a distinct Kashmiri imprint. At that time, Kashmir was part of the larger north-west India. The world renowned ancient university at Takshishila, located in north-east Punjab, and now in Pakistan, had emerged as a great centre of learning. Kashmir was not located too far away from there. This region was a beehive of intellectual activity in the first millennium BCE and Kashmiri perspective, which actually gained recognition much later, formed an important part of this activity.

Kashmiri Pandits produced a galaxy of scholars who achieved great eminence in the field of literature. Sage Patanjali, who compiled *Yoga Darshana* (Philosophy of Yoga), is believed to have been born at Gonarda,[19] in second century BCE. His mother's name was Gorika. He was educated at Takshishila (circa 800 BCE). According to Dr Subhash Kak, Patanjali's commentary (*Mahabhashya*) on Pannini's grammar, *Ashtadhyayi* "remains one of the greatest achievements of human intellect."[20] Patanjali categorised the Sanskrit grammar by a system of 4,000 algebraic rules; an unparalleled feat by even the most stringent yardstick. It proved to be a milestone in the field of scientific studies, as it laid emphasis on algorithmic explanation. Patanjali also contributed to the ancient Indian medicinal treatise, *Ayuerveda*.

Others who wrote famous commentary on Panninii's grammar included Jayaditya and Varman who wrote *Karika Vritti*. Kariyata, another Kashmiri grammarian, wrote a running commentary on Patanjali's *Mahabhashya* called *Mahabhashya Pradipa*.

Chandra school of grammar, which flourished in the reign of King Abhimanyu in 400 BCE, was founded by another Kashmiri scholar, Chandragomin. Kashmiri scholars also developed various schools of science of poetics, namely, *Rasa Alankara*, *Riti*, *Dhvani* and *Vakrokti*. These great works of literature remain unparalleled to

the present day. Similarly, *Kosh Shastra*, a work on the science of sex, second only to *Kamasutra*, was written by a Kashmiri Hindu, named Kosh.

Kashmir's importance as the centre for poetic literature can be gauged from the fact that most debates on the nature of the *Rasa* or aesthetic experience took place there. Mammata, an eleventh century authoritative rhetorician of Kashmir, synthesised different schools of Indian poetics. "He firmly supported the *Rasa-Dhvani* theory propounded by Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta, which finally helped in establishing it as the universally accepted theory of Indian aesthetics," says Dr Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani. Mammata is considered to be the last word on Sanskrit poetics. Some scholars have mentioned that India's greatest Sanskrit Grammarian, Pannini, was a Kashmiri. Manimohan Dhar writes in his book *Kashmir – Crown of India*, that Pannini was born in Saltoor, in Kashmir. However, it is now well established that Panini was not a Kashmiri. He was born in a village called Shalatur, in North West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) of Pakistan. However, he possessed great knowledge about Kashmir.

Kashmir's own script *Sharada* was also developed by Kashmiri Hindus. It was based on *Brahmi* script. Recent research suggests that Brahmi script, which was used in India and south-east Asia, half a millennium before the advent of Christ, had itself evolved from Indus (or Saraswati) scripts that were in use in India in 2500 BCE. "Pandits had adapted it to peculiar Kashmiri phonetics like broken and half-broken vowels which are not adequately or scientifically represented either by Roman or by Arabic script. Sharada script was used by the Pandits till as late as early nineteenth century. Even the copy of *Rajatarangini* which Auriel Stein[21] translated into English was in Sharada script and carried precise Kashmiri pronunciation", Says Prof K N Pandita.

Many scholars aver that the *Vishnudharmottasra Purana* that details various innovations of the ancient *Rajsuya* and the *Ashmavedha* sacrifices, (the latter of which was responsible for much of bloodshed due to its mediaeval interpretation), was written by a Kashmiri Hindu during the reign of Karkotta kings.[22]

It is noteworthy that Kashmir produced some of the greatest Sanskrit scholars of India. Among these were such luminaries, as Abhinavgupta, Anand Vardhan, Bilhan, Kalidas, Kshirswamin, Kalhana, Kshemendra, Mammat, Rajanak Shitinanth and Vaman, besides many others. One of the most illustrious pupils of Abhinavgupta, Kshemendra (1100 CE) is called the Ved Vyasa of Kashmir. His condensation of the two great epics, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* into poetical works, *Ramayana Manjari* and *Bharata Manjari* respectively, is considered to be a great contribution to ancient Indian literature. He also turned *Brihatkatha* into poetical condensation, *Brihat Katha Manjari*. The Sanskrit University at Vijeshwara (Bijbihara) later emerged as a great institution of Sanskrit scholarship after the Universities of Takshishila and Patliputra lost their sheen. However, nothing much is left of the university or its library, after it was destroyed by Sikandar Butshikan.

Bharat Munni talks of *rasa* as the essence of artistic expression. In the ninth century, Bhatta Lollatta, the oldest commentator on *Natya Shastra*, mentions it in the poetic tradition. Though Bharat Muni had mentioned only eight *rasas*, Abhinavgupta adds the ninth *rasa*, the *rasa* of peace. In addition to this, Anandvardhana wrote a great masterpiece of aesthetic theory in ninth century, namely, *Dhavanyaloka* (Light of Suggestion). In this, he disagreed with the earlier theories of *Alankara* and *Guna* propounded by Dandin and others, according to which it was the ornamental qualities and figures of speech that distinguished poetry from ordinary speech. Anandvardhana, who was a member at the court of Avantivarman,

asserted that the difference was of a quality called *Dhvani* which indirectly communicated the meaning by suggestion. This famous commentary on *Dhavanyaloka* is known as *Lochna*, *Rasa* and *Dhvani*.

In the field of *Ayurveda* also Kashmiri Hindus made their contribution felt. It was only natural that the abundance of forest cover and availability of numerous herbs, having curative powers, would attract the highly educated Pandits to study their application. It was, Charaka, a Kashmiri Pandit at the court of King Kanishka, who documented the science of herbs in *Charaka Samhita*, the first of its kind in the world. "This *Samhita* was later revised and further improved upon by another Kashmiri Hindu, Dridhabala, who added seventeen chapters to the sixth section and the whole of new eighth section. He belonged to a small village, 'Panchanadapura,' now known as 'Panjor,' situated seven miles north of Srinagar, at the confluence of Jhelum and Sindhu rivers."[23]

Dance, Drama and Music

Kalhana in his *Rajtarangini* narrates a story about King Lalitaditya. While exercising his horse, the King noticed two beautiful girls dancing and singing at the same spot every day. On further query he was informed by the girls that they did so on the instructions of their mother. The king had the spot dug in and found the remnants of two decayed temples with two doors, with the images of Rama and Lakshmana inside these. He got a new temple constructed at the spot. This clearly established that the tradition of temple dancing existed in the ancient times. In fact, the Indian classical dance in various forms originated from this tradition of dancing before the temple deities.

Bharat Muni is the first name that comes to mind when one considers Kashmir's contribution to drama and stagecraft. He is credited with having developed *Natya Shastra*, the world's first book

on stagecraft, in Kashmir. Though there is no direct evidence to suggest that the book actually came to be written in Kashmir, there are however, many pointers towards that conclusion. The debate on the book involving a number of scholars from Kashmir is a first pointer in this direction. Second, the division of *Natya Shastra* in 36 chapters conforms to the later day Shaivite system that postulated the theory of 36 *Tattavas*. Third is its undoubted connection with the Kashmiri folk dance *Baand Pather* that exists to the present day. This is based on Bharat Munni's description of *Bhana*, the one actor play. *Baand Pather* is corruption of the Sanskrit term *Bhana Patra*. Besides, the only extant complete commentary on *Natya Shastra* is written by the renowned Shaivite philosopher, Abhinavgupta.

Similarly, Kashmir has left its imprint on the Indian music also. Sharangadeva was the author of the famous work on music, *Sangītaratnākara* or the 'Ocean of Music and Dance' in thirteenth century. Sharangdeva's grandfather belonged to Kashmir, from where he had migrated to Devagiri in Karnataka, in the twelfth century. *Sangītaratnākara* forms the basis of Carnatic music. This thirteenth century composition is considered to be an important landmark in the history of music in India, and a very comprehensive treatise on Indian music. "A large part of this work is devoted to *Marga*, the ancient music that includes the system of Jatis and Grama-ragas."[24] Kalhana's *Rajtarangini* also contains references to the temple dances that prevailed during tenth century, when the temple paintings became a common feature of such architecture.

Cosmology and Science

Many scholars believe that *Yoga Vasisht*, one of the masterpieces of ancient Indian philosophy, that greatly influenced the Indian thinking, was actually composed in Kashmir. Traditionally, this philosophical work, containing instructions given by Sage Vasisht to Lord Rama in 29,000 verses, was written by Valmiki, the author of *Ramayana*.

This book is considered to be a compendium of instructions on the nature of consciousness, with fascinating description of time, space, matter, cognition and their relationship. These instructions are not merely a reflection of the prevailing thinking in Kashmir, but also in rest of India. "Starting with a position that seeks to unify space, time, matter and consciousness, an argument is made for relativity of space and time, cyclic and recursively defined universes and a non-anthropocentric view."[25]

Architecture and Painting

The ruins of numerous ancient temples, *viharas* and *stupas* that dot the landscape of Kashmir valley are manifest testimony to the excellence of ancient Kashmiri architecture and art. The magnificent temple at Martand, the enormous *stupa* and *Chaitaya* in Parihaspura, the Shiva temple at Pandrethan, the wonderful architecture of temples at Pattan, Avantipur, Mattan and many other places, are awe inspiring even in their present ruinous state, hundreds of years after these were constructed. These ruins speak of their grandeur in the bygone era and testify to the fact that these must have been among the most magnificent temples ever constructed in India. The Parihaspura monuments actually became a trend-setter for Buddhist architecture in south Asia, south-east Asia and the far East.

Ancient Kashmiris also seemed to be well-versed in the art of painting. This is evident from the paintings on the walls of ancient temples. Some of these, like the eighth century paintings in Gilgit survive to the present day. Other places in Ladakh where these paintings survived the onslaught of the local king who converted to Islam, is a set of five temples forming *Dharma-Mandala* at Alchi. Most ancient and well-preserved of these is the *Dukhang* that depicts Kashmiri Buddhist Pantheon, as also the Buddhist representation of the Hindu Pantheon.

"The wall paintings of Mangnag and manuscript painting of Thagling discovered in western Tibet are generally accepted to have been created by Kashmiri painters."[26] Kashmiri craftsmen had attained fame in the ancient times. The Buddhist art work that got transmitted to central Asia is proof of the fact that Kashmiri craftsmen were well-accomplished and famous for their skill. Art historian Susan Huntington mentions that the source of imagery and influence in the Buddhist art, when it moved north and east, was sourced from Kashmir. The paintings in Yukang caves of China, wall paintings of Qizil and Tung-huay in inner Asia and iconographic manuscripts of Japan point to Kashmir, as a possible source. However, this knowledge of Kashmir art has not been thoroughly researched and many grey areas remain to be explored.

Religion and Philosophy

Kashmir's greatest contribution to the religion and religious thought of India is the development of its unique philosophy of Kashmiri Shaivism. The basic postulate of this (Shaivism) philosophy is that the phenomenal world is the manifestation of *Shiva* (cosmic consciousness), which is made possible by *Shakti*, his divine energy, the formal cause of the objective universe.

Kashmir's Contribution to Buddhism

It was Emperor Ashoka who brought Buddhism to Kashmir in 273 BCE. It was further consolidated by the Kushan King, Kanishka (100 BCE), who held a major council of Buddhists in Kashmir that was attended by nearly 500 monks and scholars from various parts of this sub-continent (see chapter-1). This council codified the yet to be codified portion of the Buddhist teaching, besides getting the entire Buddhist canon (*Tripitaka*) inscribed on copper plates, which were then deposited in a *stupa*. Kashmir also witnessed the further development and refinement of various schools of Buddhist

thought, like Sarvastivada, Mahayana, Madhyamika, and Yogachara. This council also saw the emergence of famous Buddhist logicians like Dinnaga, Dharmakirti, Vinitadeva and Dharmottara.

The council served as a catalyst for spreading Buddha's message beyond Kashmir's borders. It was from the seminaries established during this period that Buddhism travelled to central Asia, Tibet and China. One group of missionaries to Tibet and China was led by a Kashmiri Pandit, Shyam Bhatta. Kashmir's own reputation as a renowned centre of Sanskrit learning and scholarship attracted many Buddhists from faraway lands to train here as teachers and translators.

One of the most illustrious of these was Kumarajiva (344–413 CE), whose mother, a Kuchean princess had become a nun. Kumarajiva was barely seven years old when he followed his mother in adopting a monistic life of a monk. He then decided to come to Kashmir to learn the Mahayana scriptures from Buddhayasa, a well-known Buddhist scholar hailing from a Kashmiri Brahman family. By the time he was 19 years of age, Buddhayasa could recite millions of words of Hinayana and Mahayana texts. However, he did not join holy order till the age of 27. Instead, he decided to move to Kashgar for higher learning. Here, the Crown Prince, Dharmaputra, much impressed with Buddhayasa's learning, asked him to stay in the palace.

In the meantime, Kumarajiva, who had also come there, studied the whole of *Abhidharmapitaka* under Buddhayasa for a year. Buddhayasa continued to stay in Kashgar, even after Kumarajiva left for Kucha. However, in 382 CE, Chinese forces captured Kucha and carried away Kumarajiva to China as a captive. Buddhayasa persuaded the Kashgar ruler to send an army to Kucha in 383 CE, to fight Chinese aggression; more for the sake of the security of his friend Kumarajiva. Buddhyasa personally accompanied the

force. Later on, he too left secretly and quietly for China to join Kumarajiva, ignoring the advice of the ruler.

From 401 CE onwards, the two outstanding Buddhist savants settled down at the Chinese Court in the Capital Chany'an, the present day Xinxiang. They spent their time teaching Buddhism and translating nearly 100 Buddhist scriptures into Chinese. These included The *Yogachara, Dirghagama* and *Dharma-guptaka-Vinaya.* Some of the greatest Chinese Buddhist canons are attributed to them. They influenced the Chinese Buddhist thought like no one else did, not only because they translated the previously unknown important texts, but also made it easy for Chinese to understand the Buddhist terminology and thought. They and their disciples were instrumental in establishing 'Sa-Lun', the Chinese branch of the *Madhyamika*, known by its other name, Three Treatises School. Later, Buddhayasa received the honorific *Maha-Vibhasa.* But eventually, Buddhayasa's love for his homeland brought him back to Kashmir, where he spent his last days.

Gunavarman was another famous Buddhist scholar who hailed from a princely family of Kashmir. His father Sanghananda and grandfather Haribhadra had been banished from Kashmir for their acts of omission and commission. Even though Gunavarman had been offered to rule his kingdom as his hereditary right, he chose a different course of action. Gunavarman left home at the age of 20, to become a monk. He mastered the Buddhist cannon, including the *agamas*. His first stop was at Ceylon, where he converted the Royal family to Buddhism. Then he landed at Java. By now he had earned a name for himself. This attracted the attention of the Chinese emperor, who personally invited him to his kingdom. Gunavarman reached Nanking (China) in 431 CE. During his short stay of one year at the Jetavana monastery, he was able to translate 11 works into Chinese. It was here that another Kashmiri scholar Dharmamitra collaborated with him in these translations.

The close relationship that existed between India and Xinjian has been established by unearthing of fifth century Sanskrit manuscripts written on birch bark. Aurial Stien, collected numerous antique pieces and other archeological evidence, that point to the place being an important centre of Buddhism, which had undoubtedly travelled there from Kashmir.

The *Tantric* philosophy of Kashmir also left its imprint on Buddhism as many Buddhist *Tantric* teachers had close association with Kashmir. Among these were Naropa and Padmasambhava, who according to some Tibetan sources, were Kashmiris. It was they who introduced *Tantric* Buddhism into Kashmir. It is noteworthy that Tibetan script is derived from Kashmir's *Sharda* script. This was made possible by one Thonmi-Sambhota who had been sent to Kashmir during the reign of Durlabhavardhana in seventh century to study with Devatitasimha.

Arrival of Islam in Kashmir in fourteenth century and the large-scale depredations it caused to the society in its zeal to erase the past, brought an abrupt end to the classic arts and sciences. Not only were the great monuments of human ingenuity, effort and the unparalleled skill destroyed, but also the invaluable literary works in private collection and in public libraries burnt to destruction. Iconoclastic rulers with their *fatwas* against sculpture, dance, music, painting and other fine arts, put an end to the creative genius of the people. In the subsequent decades, the creative urges at the folk level found expression in devotion through poetry and other literary forms.

Food Habits

Kashmiri Pandit's food habits are quite different from that of other Brahmans from the plains of India. Most Kashmiri Pandits are non-vegetarian; whereas the Brahmans from the plains are strictly vegetarian. Perhaps, it had something to do with the severe cold

climate of the region in which Kashmiri Pandits lived. Here, eating meat was both a necessity and even compulsion. But more than the compulsion imposed by the climate, the non-vegetarianism is directly related to influence of *Tantric* philosophy on their religious thought, their rituals and their belief in *Tantric* Shaivism. Though Kashmiri Pandits' meat preparations are not as exotic as the Muslim *wazwan*, these are nevertheless, numerous in variety and unique in taste. Their food is spicy, with liberal use of cooking oil. On a routine basis, *hak-bata* (green leafy vegetable, peculiar to Kashmir, and boiled rice) formed the staple food of Kashmiri Pandits.

Kashmiri Pandit Costume

In the Indian context, with great diversity in ethnicity and cultural traditions of its diverse races, living in vastly different climatic conditions, it is quite natural that such diversity is reflected in their traditional costumes too. Kashmir Valley, nestled within snow-covered mountains, is located within the colder region of Asia. Except for summer (June-August), when it is relatively warm, its climate is either cold or at best temperate. Therefore, costume worn by Kashmiris covers both the upper part of the body, as also the lower limbs. Though today, in the shrinking world, modern clothing is as visible in Kashmir as it is anywhere else, yet it has had its distinct dress, that was different from others and dated back to ancient and mediaeval periods.

Male costume consisted of the lower and upper garment and a headgear of different designs, locally called *ushneek/shirahshat*. Literary records and archeological findings suggest that due to Kushan influence, both men and women wore long tunic and trousers. Women are also supposed to have dressed themselves in *sari* and blouse. According to Chinese traveller, Huein Tsang, use of doublets and white linen was very common. "In winter, however, they covered their bodies with a warm cloak, which the *Nilamata*

Purana calls *Pravarana*. The rich among them were also draped in fine woolen shawls, while the ordinary people had to rest content with cheaper woollen articles like the coarse *sthulkambala*."[27]

For both, men and women, braiding of their hair and wearing tassels of different colours, was a fashion statement. Wearing of ornaments by men and women was universally prevalent in early Kashmir. Some of the commonly worn ornaments were gold necklaces, earrings, arms/wrist bands and rings. Besides these, women also wore bracelets, anklets and pearl necklaces. They would also hang a pendent on their forehead and gold chains from the end of their hair locks. The dress of Kashmiri Pandits remained, by and large, same till the advent of Islam. "*Pheran*, described as *Pravarana* in *Nilmat Purana*, became traditional attire for both men and women."[28] It was made up of two layers; the inner layer, called *potz*, was made up of white linen and the outer layer of some woollen material, to provide warmth. However, between the pheran worn by men and women, there is a difference.

The pheran worn by women has wide overturned sleeves, whose fringes are either brocaded or embroidered with gold coloured silk thread. Similar type of red bordered stripe is stitched on the open collars and on the front shoulders, going quarter way down the length and also along the skirt, all around. A coloured sash, called *loongey*, is tied around the waist. Men's *pheran*, on the other hand, is quite plain, with narrow sleeves, open collar on the left, having a lapel/lace coming out therefrom. The males also wear a turban, similar to the one worn by Muslims, except that unlike the Muslims, they do not wear a skull cap. The Pandit priests wear turban which is similar to the one worn by Namdhari Sikhs. Women too wear a headgear, which according to *Nilmat Purana*, underlines the fusion of two early races that inhabited Kashmir; the Aryans and *Nagas*. "It symbolises the decorative hood of the celestial serpent (*Nag*), having a flowing serpentine body that tapers into a double tail, almost reaching the heels of the wearer."[29]

The garment is too complicated for the modern times and is made up of many smaller but significant parts. To start with, it has a conic shaped cap, called the *kalaposh*. "It is made of a decorative brocade or silken embroidery which is attached with a wide and round band of pashmina in crimson, vermilion or scarlet. The conic shape covers the crown and the band is shortened threefold around the forehead."[30] On top of the crown is worn a delicately made network cloth topped by embroidery motifs, which tapers down to the small of the back, called *zooje*. Then there is *taranga*, which consists of three continuous wraps over and around the head. Its final wrap has a starched and glazed *moharlath*, which is glazed with an agate stone, crystal or soft giant shell. The whole length is then rolled and wrapped inwards to take on the shape of the long bodies of a pair of snakes. It has a pair of tapering tails at the lower end and a hood at the other end (top), that opens up and covers the crown of the headgear, while going down the back, nearly touching the heels.

Another typically Kashmiri Pandit tradition is the wearing of a *dejihor* by married women. No married Hindu woman in India puts on this decorative golden ornament, except a Kashmiri Pandit woman. *Dejihor* is composed of two words, *dwej* + *hor*. *Dwej* itself is a combination of two Sanskrit words, *dwe* + *Ja* (*dwe* meaning twice and *ja*, meaning born), i.e., a twice born person. The literal meaning of *hor* in Kashmiri language is pair. *Dejihor* is also used in pairs, one on each ear lobe. The ornament is called *dwej* because it signifies that after marriage, a girl enters her in-laws house, which for her, is a totally alien place. For a girl, it is as good as taking a new birth. With this ornament on, it is expected to give her in-laws a message that the person with this ornament on, is a new born child in their family and she should be treated accordingly, till such time she becomes a part of the family. The shape of this ornament is that of *yantra* of Goddess of Hari Parbat. Possibly, it is to ensure protection of the Goddess for the girl, at all times.

Notes

1. Bansi Pandit, *Explore Kashmiri Pandits,* (Dharma Publications, Delhi, 2008).
2. Ibid.
3. Jia Lal Kilam, *A History of Kashmiri Pandits,* (Gandhi Memorial College, Srinagar, Kashmir, 1955).
4. Pandit Anand Koul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, (Thackers, Calcutta, 1924).
5. Dr CK Atal, *Koshur Samachar*: December 2009, p. 22.
6. CE Tyndale Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade,* (Gulshan Books, 2005) p. 262.
7. Ibid., p. 264.
8. Ibid., p. 262.
9. Majumdar. RC, *Ancient Indian History, (*Moti Lal Banarasi Das, 8th Edition, 2007).
10. Swami Laxman Joo (Ishwar Ashram Trust, Ishber, Nishat, Srinagar, Kashmir 1996).
11. Bhatt. S, (Ed.), *Kashmiri Pandits: A Cultural Heritage,* (Lancer Books, New Delhi, 1994).
12. Rice cooked with turmeric and mixed with mustard.
13. Dr Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani, *Koshur Samachar*, December 2008.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Dr PL Ganjoo, *Koshur Samachar*, Oct 2008.
17. Sir George Abraham Grierson, *Linguistic Surveys of India* – 1903–1928 (Oxford University Press, New York).
18. Al Beruni (973–1048 CE), a Persian Mathematcian and Astronomer.
19. Dr Subhash Kak: in his introduction to Bansi Pandit's *Exploring Kashmiri Pandits*. "Opinions differ on this subject. Some scholars have identified Gonarda province as Gonda district of Uttar Pradesh. However, some other scholars, including Kalhana, quote Gonarda as the name of the ruling dynasty of which three kings ruled Kashmir and contend that Gonardiya was suggestive of the country that they ruled. Thus, contentions in regard to Patanjali's birth-place keep swinging from Uttar Pradesh to Kashmir,"says Bansi Pandit in personal communication to the author.
20. Bansi Pandit, n. 1.
21. Sir Marc Auriel Stein is described at p. 7.
22. "In the ancient times, a king would let a horse free to roam around for a year. The king's soldiers would then try to establish their rule in all the areas visited by the horse. This led to much bloodshed and wars among the kings. "The *Vishudharmottara Purana* replaced these ancient rites by the *Rajyabhishekha* (royal consecration) and *Surapratishtha* (fixing of the divine abode)." Dr Subash Kak, *The Wonder that was Kashmir* (International Journal of Indian Studies, Vol 3, 1993).
23. http://hinduonline.co/Scriptures/Samhita/CharakSamhita.html.

24. Dr Subash Kak, n. 22.
25. Ibid.
26. Dr Subash Kak in foreword to Bansi Pandit's *Explore Kashmiri Pandits* (Dharma Publications, Delhi, 2008).
27. Source: http://unmesh.com/may98.html downloaded from KPNetwork@yahoogroups.com on February 8, 2009.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.

7

KASHMIRIYAT

"Popular saint singers became the apostles of a synthesis and rapprochement, aided by common points in Advaita and Sufism."
—*Anon*

Kashmiriyat is an expression that is often used in political and other discourse to define Kashmiri identity; social, cultural, ethnic and otherwise. Simply put, it means peaceful coexistence between the Muslim majority and the Hindu minority sections of Kashmiri society. However, the term *Kashmiriyat* represents so much of fact and fiction that the ground reality seems to have been completely lost sight of.

General Perception

Essentially, *Kashmiriyat* means a common and shared identity of the two main communities of the valley, the Pandits and the Muslims. The essence of this commonality has been brought out by Iffat Malik, who quotes Munshi, thus: "Truly it was said that Pandits and Muslims were two brothers, pursuing two different faiths in perfect mutual affection, respect and trust. They shared each others joys and sorrows, respected equally the sufis, saints and sages, traditions and rituals and places of worship... In essence, they lived a common community life, keeping the core of religion outside the

circle of day to day life...These shared values were rooted in common stock, ethnicity and perceptions of good and evil, which they took pride in, as an invaluable inheritance from the past."[1]

How did these shared values come about? Kashmir has been a centre of Buddhism, Hinduism and later Islam. Historically, the influence that these three major religions of the world had over the region and its people, resulted in some of the practices and rituals of previous religion, finding their way into the new faith, to which people got converted. The fact that most of the Muslims in the Valley are converts, it is only natural that they would have carried a fair number of practices from their former faith into the new one, to which they converted. For example, a process of synthesis between Kashmir Shaivism and Islam resulted in the latter inheriting a number of rituals and practices from Hinduism. Going further back into history, Hinduism itself had inherited many precepts and practices from Buddhism. Proponents of *Kashmiriyat* hold this synthesis responsible for giving rise to a composite culture by stating that it has imbibed the best of each of these three religions. Balraj Puri says something similar when he writes, "Kashmir has been a melting pot of ideas and races. It received every new creed with discrimination and enriched it with its own contribution, without throwing away its earlier accretions."[2] Bamzai too reinforces the same theory when he writes, "As in religion, so in philosophy, arts and literature, Kashmir evolved a composite culture... The fusion and assimilation of varied faiths and cultures had resulted in their particular and specific ethnicity."[3]

One of the most distinct features of this assimilation and common culture is the degree of reverence that Kashmiri Muslims show towards Hindu shrines. Hindus also showed similar respect for Muslim shrines and *dargahs*. Shared superstitions, beliefs and other religious practices further reinforce this perception. In fact,

something typical to Kashmiri Muslims is the manner in which they pray in the mosques. This is similar to the manner in which the Kashmiri Hindus pray. Such practice was carried by the Hindus when they were coerced into converting to Islam. Bazaz writes, "Islam, as practiced in the valley... has been deeply influenced by the ancient Kashmir culture... A Kashmiri Muslim shares with his Hindu compatriots many inhibitions, superstitions, idolatrous practices, as well as social liberties and intellectual freedoms, which are unknown to Islam."[4]

The other commonality is the *Pir Parasti*, meaning reverence for spiritually evolved sages and their shrines; a practice that is an essential part of Hindu belief. However, this phenomenon is not peculiar to Kashmiris only, but is prevalent all over the sub-continent. Nevertheless, among the commonalities; it is an important shared practice. It is noteworthy that religion forms a big part of *Kashmiriyat* or this common identity of Kashmiris. R C Tremblay writes, "In fact, it is a significant aspect of Kashmiris' regional identity... Its emphasis on the syncretistic world view and tolerance for other religions has given rise to development of indigenous practices and philosophies, and such traditions of both Hinduism and Islam in the valley, that they tend to differentiate both religious communities from their counterparts elsewhere."[5]

Another factor that adds to the common identity is their shared ethnicity and history. Kashmiri Hindus have a lot in common with Kashmiri Muslims, while at the same time; they differ greatly from Hindus in rest of India.

The faith in *Rishi-Sufi* traditions in Kashmir is the heart and soul of what is known as *Kashmiriyat*. The *Sufi* order of Islam arrived in the valley from Persia, central Asia, north and central India, after the emergence of *Khanqahs* and *Silsilas*. This happened almost simultaneously with the arrival of Islam, though much before the establishment of Muslim rule in these regions. But the

organised and institutionalised *Sufi* activities began only towards the end of fourteenth century. *Rishi* order, on the other hand, evolved indigenously in the valley itself in the fifteenth century.

When Islam arrived in Kashmir, its ethos got permeated with Hindu tradition of asceticism and the Buddhist belief in renunciation. This was something akin to *Sufi* world view. *Sufi* itself derives from *saf*, an Arabic word meaning wool; for the only earthly possession of these inspired men and women was a coarse piece of woollen cloth; rest everything else having been renounced.

Additionally, many Sufis found similarities between the Hindu philosophy of *Advaita* (non-duality) and the Islamic philosophy of divine unity, represented by the two main streams, *Wahadut-u-Wajood* of Ibn Arabi and *Wahadat-ul-Shohood*. This divine unity of entire mankind was propounded by Rishis and Sufis by speaking in simple language that was understood by the common masses. This synthesis is poetically conveyed by Sarfi, one of the well known *Sufi* of Kubravi order, who wrote:

"O, Sarfi! What are you going to gain from the pilgrimage?
If Ka' aba, temple and tavern are not identical with you,
O, Sarfi! As on every side a ray has
Fallen from his face to light up the night,
Impossible it is for you to say that Somnath
Has not the light of Kaaba."[6]

The synthesis at times appeared complete when some of the Sufis justified and accepted idol worship[7] as a manifestation of mystical love. Sheikh Yaqub, a *Sufi* of Kubravi order challenged the *Ulema* on this score. Same thing can be said about the belief of Sufis in the core Hindu belief of re-incarnation. The following verses from the *Masnawi* by Hazrat Jalaludin Rumi are quite well-known in Kashmir:

"I died as mineral and became a plant,
I died as plant and rose to aṇimal,
I died as animal and was man,
Why should I fear?
When was I less by dying/
Yet once more I shall die as man, to sore with angels blest;
but even from
Angel-hood I must pass on..."[8]

It is pertinent to mention that some religious figures and authors did not approve of such interpretation of Islam and considered these Sufis as being anti-Shariat. This would be evident from the writings of Mirza Haider who wrote about the "Un-Islamic and anti-Shariat ways of Sufis."[9] Even Sheikh Noor Udin Noorani (n.9, p.65) had a running battle with such critics. He was unsparing in his criticism of those *mullahs* who preached hatred through their sermons, rather than propagate the true message of their religious faith. Looking ahead, he prophetically said:-

"The people of Kalyug in every house will pretend to be saints,
As a prostitute does when dancing, they will pretend to be innocent and extremely gentle.
They will excel thieves in living by unlawful means,
To hide themselves they will repair to forest."

Even in meditative practices, the *Sufi* methodology of using various variations of *Pass-e-Anfas* (watching the breath) is pretty similar to *Prannayama* as practiced in *Hath Yoga* and made popular in Kashmir by Shaivite sages. "The Sufis have added the repetition of the word Allah, Allahoo or Huwwa to their meditative technique."[10]

Sultan Shaheen writes, "Nund Rishi faced restrictions during the reign of Suha Bhatta (see chapter-2) who had started persecuting non-Muslims in his new found Islamic zeal after conversion to the new faith."[11] Spartan and frugal life style of Rishis, Sufis and

Buddhist and Jain monks added greatly to this religious synthesis. Many chroniclers have even written about this similarity. Emperor Jahangir writes of them, "…They neither eat meat nor marry. They always plant fruit bearing trees in uninhabited parts, so that they may benefit people, but they themselves do not hope to reap any advantages from these trees."[12] According to G.M.D. Sofi, it was the Syeds and their followers who planted the seed of mysticism in the valley. He writes, "…These Syeds and their followers seemed to have stimulated the tendency to mysticism for which Buddhism and Vedantism had already paved the way."[13] The chief schools of *Sufi* order were Suhrawardi, Kubravi, Naqshbandhi and Qadri. Among some well known Sufis, perhaps the foremost was Bulbul Shah (see chapter-2), a well-known disciple of Shah Nimatullah Wali Farsi, a Suhrawardi Sufi. Sufism survived and flourished in the Indian sub-continent, particularly in Kashmir, due to "long period of interaction between Islam and the esoteric strains of Hinduism and other faiths of India."[14] However, whereas in most Muslim societies Sufis lived on the margins of society and *Sufi* order remained confined in its spread and reach; in Kashmir, they became a predominant force, exerting great influence on the society in general and enriching the true concept of *Kashmiriyat* in the region. However, the concept of *Kashmiriyat* never became a reality in Kashmir for various reasons which are enumerated below.

Re-visiting the Concept of *Kashmiriyat*

Though many have extolled the virtues of this unique phenomenon, *Kashmiriyat* needs to be examined afresh in the light of irrefutable evidence presented by Kashmir's history; past and present, that goes against the fundamental concept of *Kashmiriyat*. Ever since the arrival of Islam in the valley, the continuous persecution of Kashmiri Pandits at the hands of Muslim rulers, with few exceptions, proves beyond doubt that if at all there existed something like

Kashmiriyat; it remained totally subservient to the dictates of radical elements within Kashmiri Muslims. The events of late eighties and early nineties, only reinforces this argument; *Kashmiriyat* was nowhere in evidence. It is, therefore, worthwhile to revisit this concept.

The radicalisation of Muslims in Kashmir in the late eighties was complete antithesis of the moderate Islam whose outward manifestations were anti-clergy exhortations of Sufis and fusion between the accommodating form of worships and peoples' reverence for divine institutions. The collective display of passion at *dargahs* was a manifestation of this belief. However, history proves that the more radical strain of Islam has always lurked around, waiting to take advantage of the slightest change of public mood and the emergence of favourable political undercurrents. In the modern era, the radicalisation of Islam can, to a large extent, be attributed to the thoughts and writings of the renowned Islamic scholar and chief of Jamat-e-Islami, Abul Ala Maududi. His passionate advocacy of the puritanical form of political Islam (opposed to the *Sufi* form) converted sizeable sections of the sub-continent's Muslims to this ideology. Though this was visible largely in Pakistan, Kashmir did not remain untouched by the new trend in that country. Nevertheless; it was Zia-ul-Haque who used the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, to turn this fertile idea into a groundswell of political Islam, whose consequences are being felt by the whole world, not least by Pakistan itself. *Kashmiriyat*, or whatever little was left of it by the middle of eighties itself receded into background, as the radical Islamic thought and deed became more fashionable.

Besides, these events proved that the concept of *Kashmiriyat* based on their similarities and commonalities, are only skin deep. TN Madan explains in his in-depth analysis of life in rural Kashmir, "the traditional clothing of Pandit men, women and their children is different from that of their Muslim co-villagers. Pandit homes

look different from those of others... both from inside and outside. Their places of worship are also distinctive in appearance, as are their weddings, religious and funeral gatherings... Though they speak Kashmiri, Pandit speech is more laden with Sanskrit as compared to Muslim speech. Personal and family names, with few exceptions, are also different."[15]

As far as the social interaction is concerned, beyond the superficial, *Kashmiriyat* did not exist. Part of this superficial interaction was the result of Pandits being dependent on Muslims for some of the basic services. Among the Pandits, there was no lower class or other backward classes (these having converted to Islam centuries earlier), which could provide services, such as blacksmiths, cobblers, potters, washer men, barbers, sanitary workers, etc. Hence the tasks which they were prohibited from doing themselves, were performed by Muslims. This ensured almost daily contact between the two communities at the common man's level. This inter-dependence created a sort of social bond that defined the relationship between the two communities. Nevertheless, this compromise did not breach the superficial similarity and social interaction remained, by and large, thin. They neither inter-married nor inter-dined.

Though modernisation had broken some barriers between the two, resulting in socialising between two communities, particularly in urban environment, most intimate form of social interaction still remained a taboo. The superficial bonhomie that existed between the Pandits and Muslims at the individual level would always be over-shadowed by the Kashmiri Muslim's religious compulsions. No matter what an individual Muslim in Kashmir might think, it is their collective will that always prevails. This collective will is moulded almost entirely by the dictates of the radical fringe. As Winston Churchill said, "Individual Muslims may show splendid qualities, but the influence of the religion paralyses the social development of those who follow it..."[16]

It is a big misnomer that no communal killings took place in Kashmir at the time of partition. There were gory massacres of Kashmiri Pandits, Sikhs and Khatris in Muzaffarabad, though Srinagar escaped that fate. "Thirty eight thousand Hindus and Sikhs were massacred by the invaders in the territories overrun by them. Twelve thousand Hindus including Kashmiri Pandits perished in the town of Rajouri alone."[17] The absence of communal conflict in Srinagar is also wrongly attributed to *Kashmiriyat*. It is said that the regional identity had overshadowed the religious identity and hence no religious strife resulted. However, this is a false assumption. For one, it takes two religious groups to indulge in communal violence. Kashmiri Pandits have never confronted the overt manifestations of Muslim communalism, which would result in a communal clash. On the other hand, they have always yielded, preferring to suffer in silence.

Besides, some other realities of Kashmir's social and political life also contributed to the absence of communal clashes between the two communities. The Pandits were completely dependent on Kashmiri Muslims for almost everything, because Kashmiri Muslims dominated and controlled every aspect of social, economic and political life in Kashmir. In order to adopt mainstream politics as a preferred choice, Kashmiri Pandits had wholeheartedly supported Sheikh Abdullah after he had turned Muslim Conference (MC) into National Conference (NC). Both, Kashmiri Pandits and NC, were in the forefront of campaign against the tribal invasion of Kashmir and to bring to an end the feudal dispensation represented by the Maharaja. To cap it all, the possibility of a clash between the two in socio-economic spheres also did not exist, as both occupied separate niches. It was only after the competition in the same activity, i.e., job market increased, that the relationship started deteriorating.

The other thing that contributed to this deterioration was the mass mobilisation of Muslims using the platform of political Islam. Sheikh Abdullah must have been aware of the consequences of such

mobilisation. He was himself confronted with a dilemma, while deciding to make choice of accession between the dominions of India and Pakistan. On the one hand, he felt that Kashmiris would be better off in secular and progressive India and on the other, he was aware of the fanatical nature of Kashmiri Muslims. Joseph Korbel brings out this contradiction in his book, *Danger in Kashmir*, thus, "He (Shiekh Abdullah) was a Muslim leader who believed, as India did, in non-communal, secular state, but who was aware of the fanatical devotion of his followers to Islam. What then should he do? Pakistan was a reactionary country, he said and he was convinced that a union of Kashmir with Pakistan would finally go against the interests of his people. They would be better off with India, but what could he do if the sentiments of his people pushed them in a direction against his better judgement."

After the Afghans were replaced by Sikhs in Kashmir, the fortunes of Pandits had turned for the better after decades of brutal suffering. And such improvement continued during the Dogra rule. This led to their being identified with the ruling class itself. Pandits thus became direct and automatic targets of Muslims during the anti-Maharaja stir of July 1931. This cemented the divide between the two communities.

At this point in history, Sheikh Abdullah was trying to emerge as a leader of Kashmiri Muslims, which would enable him to stake a claim to represent the whole state. But to achieve this objective, he faced two distinct challenges. On the one hand, he had to confront the radical elements in MC, and on the other, meet the challenge posed by Hindus of Jammu. "When the discourse on common citizenship did not produce a consensus due to the entrenched religious identity, *Kashmiriyat* was conveniently used to sustain the majority nationalism,"[18] says Chitralekha Zutshi. It was in this background that the term *Kashmiriyat* was devised by Sheikh Abdullah. This would enable him to kill two birds with one stone;

in addition to taking care of the political contradictions within the State, it would also help him to win the support of liberal democrats within Congress, with whom he was trying to establish a close relationship. Writing about the concept of *Kashmiriyat*, Chitralekha Zutshi further mentions, "It did not emerge from the soil of Kashmir; it was a product of the collusion of Kashmiri and Indian majoritarian nationalism, both of which needed to obscure the inner contradictions." However, even after *Kashmiriyat* became the byword of NC, the minority community of Kashmir was apprehensive and gave vent to these apprehensions from time to time. Nevertheless, it goes to the credit of Sheikh Abdullah that he succeeded to a great extent in presenting "*Kashmiriyat* as uncomplicated and all encompassing entity."[19]

After the events of 1947, with power firmly in the hands of NC headed by Sheikh Abdullah, the upsurge among Kashmiri Muslims greatly marginalised the Pandits, both economically and socially. Thus, while this created a gulf between the two, the subsequent increase in religious orthodoxy and its ever- enlarging scope created a crisis of trust and confidence between the two communities. While *Kashmiriyat* did not produce common citizenship due to Kashmiri Muslims' entrenched religious identity, it was conveniently used to sustain majority nationalism.

Under the circumstances, it will be naive to suggest that a single Kashmiri community, whose identity is defined by *Kashmiriyat*, does really exist. Undoubtedly, there is much in common between the two, that differentiates them from non-Kashmiris, but there is no similarity between the two as far as the critical indicators of social and religious interaction are concerned. Indeed, both communities are distinctive, with their own social obligations, religious practices and other core beliefs and values. If at all *Kashmiriyat* really existed, it did so only prior to the arrival of Islam in the valley, when the entire Valley's population was Hindu. As early as seventeenth century,

only three centuries after the arrival of Islam in the valley, fanatical tendencies among Kashmiri Muslims were quite visible. Francisco Paelsaert, who was in India between 1621 and 1627, while in service of the Dutch East India Company, describes Kashmiris as "Fanatical Muslims."[20]

In reality, Kashmir's Hindus and its Muslims were part of a pluralistic society and some degree of harmony did exist between the two in the past. Both shared a strong sense of regional identity and mutually respected religious practices. Given the right environment and thoughtful direction, it could have led to a common Kashmiri identity, true *Kashmiriyat*. This did not happen. On the other hand, these differences got accentuated, with Muslims getting increasingly radicalised, finally resulting in the genocide of Kashmiri Pandits and their exodus. No matter from what angle one looks at it; it is a failure of the noble concept of *Kashmiriyat* and secular experiment in Kashmir.

Some Recent views of Eminent People

It is interesting to note that in a recently published book, *Kashmiriyat Through the Ages*,[21] which contains essays on the subject by eminent politicians, academics, journalists, etc, no one has been able to define authoritatively what *Kashmiriyat* means. As Professor Mohammad Aslam writes, "They talk about Kashmir history, politics, society, religion, etc., without really telling us what *Kashmiriyat* means."

Following are the views of some of these eminent people on the subject:

Dr Gul Wani finds *Kashmiriyat* in the unique and rich culture of Kashmir.

Professor Riaz Punjabi finds *Kashmiriyat* in the unique way religion is practised in Kashmir — Muslim, Hindu and Sikh shrines

located within close vicinity of each other. "The Hari Parbhat... has become the focal point where people of diverse faiths, coming from many directions, converge on one point, to provide a living instance of the adage that ways might be different, but they lead to one goal." He believes that for various political and economic factors, the Kashmiri people "abandoned their indigenous beliefs and traditions, and started merging with the traditions and beliefs of India's majority," – and this has come under strain for the last more than two decades (referring to the period of insurgency in the Valley).

Professor Hassnain in his essay gives us a historical account of the land, its people and their rulers from time to time. He believes that it refers to "our roots, our culture, our traditions and our Kashmiri language," which have evolved "over all these centuries up to the present times, into a full-bloomed flower." He finds that *Kashmiriyat* (whatever that means) had been assaulted from time to time, but Kashmiris have never allowed it to die. He further mixes up *Kashmiriyat* with the disappearance of the holy relic from Hazratbal Shrine and writes, "The theft of the holy hair of the Prophet was in reality an assault on *Kashmiriyat*. It was a conspiracy to obliterate and destroy the focal point of unity of Kashmiri Muslims." The theft made Kashmiri Muslims go against India. However, miraculously, the relic was found and *Kashmiriyat* was saved. One of the effects of this assault was the "dismissal of the State government led by Shamshuddin, and subsequent release of Sheikh Abdullah from prison."

Professor Saifuddin Soz's essay talks about the alien rulers of Kashmir between 1586 and 1947. He gives credit to Kashmiri Pandits for keeping *Kashmiriyat* alive, "though most of [them] remained part of the establishment and manned the administration during these centuries of alien domination... there are shining examples of how Pandits strengthened Kashmiri identity."

Ghulam Nabi Khayal finds Sufis as builders of the Kashmir identity, while Professor Ishaq Khan holds Rishism responsible for laying a strong foundation of *Kashmiriyat*. He says, "Nothing explains the crucial issue of *Kashmiriyat* or Kashmiri identity as explicitly as the gradual transition of Kashmiris to Islam over a period of five centuries, thanks to the role of the Sufis and Rishis." However, about *Kashmiriyat*, he writes that "the term *Kashmiriyat* is not of local origin. When and where was it coined, needs to be explored; but it is certain that in the aftermath of the Indira-Sheikh Accord of 1975, the NC leadership sought to vindicate and reinforce its faith in *Kashmiriyat* against the background of the emergence of Bangladesh." According to him, the term was used by the NC to perpetuate its rule after the Indira-Sheikh Accord in 1975.

Professor Ahad in his essay *The Genesis of Kashmiriyat*, says that it was coined during Farooq Abdullah's rule in eighties.

According to Professor Mohammad Aslam, the essays contained in *Kashmiriyat Through the Ages*, are as confusing as the term *Kashmiriyat* itself, and no authentic or reliable definition is given by any of the authors. In fact, Rishism and Rishis' contribution to Kashmir has been alluded to by almost all writers. The book contains many contentious issues to debate on. Since a review has no place for such a debate, it is better to leave it for Kashmir historians. It is certain that *Kashmiriyat through the Ages* offers nothing new on the subject."[22]

NOTES

1. Iffat Malik, *Kashmir, Ethnic Conflict, International Dispute,* (Oxford University Press, 2002).
2. Balraj Puri in a newspaper article titled, *Visibility of Kashmiri Identity.*
3. Bamzai, Prithivi Nath Kaul, *A History of Kashmir: Political, Social, Cultural; from the Earliest Times to the Present Day,* (Delhi: Metropolitan Book Co, 1962).
4. Bazaz, PN *History of the Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir,* (Kashmir Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1954).

5. Tremblay, RC; *Kashmir: The Valley's Political Dynamics, Contemporary South Asia*, 1995.
6. Sultan Shaheen, Kashmiriyat: Gift of Rishi — Sufi order, Speaking Tree; *The Times of India,* April 20, 2002.
7. "Hindus are not idol worshippers. The 'idol' was coined by the British in India to denigrate Hindus and their religion/culture. Hindus worship *Murtis.* Based upon the definition of idol in English Dictionary, the Sanskrit word *Murti* should not be translated as 'idol'. The correct translation would be 'image' or 'icon.'" Bansi Pandit.
8. Sultan Shaheen, n. 6.
9. HN Rafiabadi, *An Excursion into Kashmir's Mystical Past, Tribune,* April 24, 2002.
10. Sultan Shaheen, n. 6.
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8

GENESIS OF KASHMIR PROBLEM AND HOW IT GOT COMPLICATED: EVENTS BETWEEN 1931 AND 1947 CE

"If there is one place on the face of the earth where all the dreams of living man have found a home from the very earliest days of man's existence on earth, it is India". —*Romain Rolland*

Forces, that got unleashed in the sub-continent after the departure of the British, resulted in a paradigm shift of political processes at the national and regional levels. It took in its sweep a number of well-entrenched notions of social hierarchies and hitherto unquestioned political equations. These changes, set into motion much before the departure of the British, reached their crescendo when the British departed. With the sub-continent left without a strong central authority, the vacuum thus created, was filled-in by the Indian National Congress and Muslim League at the national level and local and regional leaders at the sub-national level. These sub-national movements representing narrow regional and local aspirations, were led by charismatic leaders. Something similar happened in Jammu and Kashmir State too, where Muslim politico-religious consolidation played an important role. This ensured that all along the movement retained its Islamic character rather than a nationalistic one, which would embrace all communities of the state.

Rise of Kashmiri Majoritarianism

First signs of the rise of Muslim politico-religious consolidation were visible in 1927 when the Maharaja, bowing to the demands of some professionals and white collar workers, allowed the recruitment of Kashmiris into army and government services. Subsequently, this informal group formed itself into the Muslim Reading Room Party, which held its meetings in mosques and with the help of *mullahs* tried to reach out to the people. From there, the meetings shifted into the open, reaching out to the middle classes and the peasants.

Sheikh Abdullah was only twenty-five when he led the movement against the Maharaja. Born at Soura, on the outskirts of Srinagar, his father, Sheikh Mohammad Ibrahim was a shawl dealer. One among five children; he studied in Islamic College, Lahore, and Aligarh Muslim University. Having a Masters' degree in chemistry from Aligarh Muslim University, Sheikh Abdullah, on his return to the valley, applied for a teaching job in Sri Pratap College at Srinagar. "According to the famous film maker, Arun Kaul, Sheikh Abdullah, who had secured a third division in his MSc degree, had to compete with Niranjan Nath Kak, (brother of RC Kak), who had received a gold medal for topping (securing first class first position) in MSc chemistry from Banaras Hindu University. Kak was naturally selected for the post of a lecturer in the subject and Sheikh had to rest content with a teacher's job in the local Islamia School.

Sheikh Abdullah was beside himself with jealousy and anger. He attributed his rejection to his being a Muslim and gave vent to his chagrin by joining communal politics," says Dr Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani. It was left to the famous Ahmadiya intellectual, Moulvi Abdullah Vakil to introduce Sheikh Abdullah to his audience at Reading Room, Fateh Kadal, where the Sheikh started his speech with reciting the Quranic verses to infuse new blood into the struggle against the Maharaja. According to Dr KN Pandit, "Moulvi Abdullah Vakil was a known Ahmadiya intellectual

who first introduced Sheikh Abdullah to Kashmir audience when the Sheikh began his political career after resigning as a government teacher in 1932. By this time the political consolidation among the Muslims had reached a stage where its leadership could now openly challenge the Maharaja." However, without the connivance of the British resident, it was nearly impossible to revolt against the Dogra ruler.

For its own reasons, Britain was rather too happy to lend its helping hand to Sheikh Abdullah in his rebellion against the Maharaja. The Maharaja had taken a highly patriotic stand at the First Round Table Conference in London by opposing British rule in India. He had even refused to hand-over Gilgit to Britain. The latter made no secret of their disapproval of such a stand adopted by the ruler of one of their biggest and most important princely states. They were unlikely to overlook it for the serious political consequences it would entail for the 'empire' if left un-responded. Clipping the Maharaja's wings would serve their immediate political purpose. Besides, it would serve its other strategic purpose; coerce him to submit to the British demand for lease of Gilgit, the all important strategic outpost in the *Great Game* (n. 17, p. 133). Wakefield, Maharaja Hari Singh's Prime Minister and the British Resident in the state, was ideally placed to implement the conspiracy on the ground. The events of July 13, 1931, were so orchestrated that the state's Muslim subjects would be provoked into indulging in communal violence against Kashmiri Hindus, which would eventually destabilise Maharaja's government. Some historians have even gone to the extent of calling these events a conspiracy hatched by the British Political Department against Maharaja Hari Singh.

The communal elements of the Muslim Reading Room Party incited the Muslim mobs to set themselves on the hapless Pandits. Outwardly, however, they projected that the ostensible purpose of their movement was to rise in revolt against the Dogra rule.

The communal violence that broke out saw the shops and houses of Pandits not only looted but also burnt. Similar incidents were also reported from other parts of the valley. Nine members of a Pandit family in Kanikoot were axed to death by Muslims of a neighbouring village. The village located in Budgam district had a sizeable Kashmiri Pandit population. The lone survivor was a young boy who was not sleeping in the house during the night when it was attacked.

During the day-long riots, Kashmiri Pandits bore the brunt of Muslim fury. To control the situation, the police had to resort to firing on the violent mobs, which resulted in the death of 21 rioters. Since then, every year Muslim organisation of Kashmir, including those that profess to be secular, observe July 13, as *The Martyrs Day*. However, Pandits recall the day as *Bhatta Loot*, meaning, the day when Pandits were looted. From then on, contrary to what is being preached, communalism in the state politics got entrenched and institutionalised, with communal propaganda taking a centre stage. It attained a momentum of its own and conditions only got aggravated with the passage of time.

In October 1932, the Muslim Reading Room Party was turned into Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference (MC) by Sheikh Abdullah, who, by now had been bestowed with the title of *Sher-e-Kashmir* (Lion of Kashmir). He became its first president. Initially, its sole aim was to seek justice for Muslims, but with the passage of time it became a strong political movement against the Dogra rule. In 1933, another revolt, led by Ahrar Party, exclusively composed of the Muslims of Punjab broke out. These elements had slipped into the State through its porous borders to fish in Kashmir's troubled waters.

Pressed by the open revolt of his subjects and 'advised' by his British masters, the Maharaja passed 'Constitutional Act, Regulation No-1' in 1934 to create a diarchic form of Government, which stipulated

the formation of a 75-member '*Praja Sabha*'(People's Assembly); 40 of which would be elected and 35 nominated. In the first ever elections held in the state, the MC captured 14 of the 21 seats allotted to Muslim voters. However, the Assembly had only consultative powers and voting was not based on universal adult suffrage. The rules of voting were such that only eight per cent of the population formed the total electorate. When these facts became known, all the members walked out, forcing a new election in 1936. This time, the communal rhetoric indulged in by the MC ensured its victory in 19 of the 21 seats.

Having allowed the communal rhetoric of his party to dominate the political movement to gain immediate advantage in the elections, Sheikh Abdullah started showing signs of discomfort with the increasingly mediaeval and theocratic thinking dominating the political discourse in his party. He was particularly upset with its excessive pre-occupation with the Hindu-Muslim question, being propagated by Chudhary Ghulam Abbas, another important leader of the MC. Having drawn inspiration from the secular and progressive thought that permeated the independence movement launched by Indian National Congress, Sheikh Abdullah felt that MC was losing focus of the true significance of its own political struggle, by adopting an extremely communal position on every issue. By this time differences had also arisen in the working committee of Muslim Conference concerning the constitutional reforms introduced by the Maharaja.

The differences between the two factions; one led by Sheikh Abdullah and the other by Chudhary Ghulam Abbas, representing a more extreme faction within the party, created further friction between the two leaders. These differences enlarged the gulf that separated the two personalities. As a consequence, Sheikh Abdulah and Chowdhary Abbas parted ways; the former now forming All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference and the latter assuming the powers of the sole dictator of MC. Ghulam

Mohammad Sadiq, a colleague of Sheikh Abdullah, with distinct left leanings, became its first president. MC now became a staunch pro-Muslim League party, while Sheikh Abdullah came closer to the Indian National Congress.

Sheikh Abdullah had an imposing presence and was a gifted orator. This enabled him to convince and sway his audience, which gave him tremendous confidence. But at the same time; it also inflated his ego and made him haughty. The tremendous applause and ovation that he received from the public, his unparalleled popularity among the Kashmiris, and the love and obsession of Nehru for him, further accentuated this defective trait in him. Be it as it may, with Sheikh Abdullah receiving increasing support for his movement against the Maharaja from Indian National Congress, particularly from Pandit Nehru, proximity between the Sheikh and Congress grew steadily. After forming the more secular sounding All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, membership of the new party was now thrown open to all people, irrespective of religion, though its agenda was heavily tilted to satisfy Muslim sentiment. Many Kashmiri Pandits, including some prominent ones, also joined the Party.

In 1944, resolution of *Naya Kashmir* was adopted by the NC. During the same year, Mohammad Ali Jinnah visited Kashmir to preside over the annual session of the MC. It gave him an opportunity to wean away Kashmiris from Sheikh Abdullah and establish his hold over Kashmiri Muslims. It did have some effect as many people left the ranks of NC and flocked towards the MC. It may be recalled that the Muslim League leaders, particularly Jinnah, had consistently opposed Sheikh Abdullah's movement against the Maharaja, calling it a *goonda* movement. During this visit, the Sheikh personally welcomed him to the valley and held long private talks with him. On the second day of the visit, Jinnah asked Abdullah at a huge public gathering at Jama Masjid, Srinagar, to wind up

his NC. Using very intemperate language, Jinnah also accused the Sheikh of doublespeak. He appealed to the people to join MC and, to make matters worse; he called Sheikh Abdullah and NC workers as "malcontents" and a "band of gangsters." An infuriated Sheikh lashed out at Jinnah and asked NC workers to see him out of the valley. After this incident, Mohammed Ali Jinnah was not able to address any public gathering in Kashmir and was forced to leave the valley much before his scheduled departure.

This created a permanent political gulf between the two pre-eminent Muslim leaders of the sub-continent and convinced the Sheikh that his political future would be bleak if he joined Pakistan. Nevertheless, Jinnah's visit certainly threatened his popularity. To regain the initiative and establish himself as the lone voice of Kashmiris, he now adopted a maximalist position. Initially, he had wanted to establish a democratic government under the aegis of the Maharaja and had left the door open for negotiations. But now, he wanted the abdication of the Maharaja. To achieve this, he launched a mass civil disobedience movement called 'Quit Kashmir Movement' on May 10, 1946. To rouse people's passions, he made use of 'The Treaty of Amritsar' (see chapter-4) by calling it a 'sale deed', in which the Kashmiris were 'sold to the Dogras like cattle'.

At that time, Pandit RC Kak was the Prime Minister of the State, having risen from the post of a librarian in a local college. Being knowledgeable and politically conscious, he realised the implications of the seditious utterances of Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues. He, therefore, put Sheikh Abdullah under arrest. Nehru dramatised the event by immediately arriving in Kashmir to plead his case, but was detained, though released the next day. This event prevented any further improvement of relations between the Maharaja and Nehru, which were already strained due to Nehru's support to Sheikh Abdullah against the Maharaja.

In the meanwhile, in October 1946, MC, now a sister organisation of the Muslim League, under the leadership of Maulvi Yousuf Shah, the *Mirwaiz* (religious leader of Kashmiri Muslims), launched 'Direct Action' campaign, heeding the call given by Muslim League in Calcutta. MC also wanted Kashmir to join Pakistan, though its president, Chaudhary Hamid-Ullah Khan, was in two minds and wanted the state to remain independent.

British Withdrawal Turns Partition into a Complex Exercise

During British Raj, India was divided into two distinct entities, British Provinces and Princely States. Princely states, under the Government of India Act 1935, included any territory, whether described as a state, an estate, and a *jagir* or otherwise. These were under the suzerainty of 'His Majesty' and not a part of British India. In practice the princely states were semi-independent and protected by United Kingdom under the 'Paramountcy Doctrine'. This entitled the King of England and Emperor of India to provide protection to the princes, in return of their pledge of fealty to him. These 584 princely states were scattered over roughly 1.88 million sq km, or 45.3 per cent of the undivided India's surface area, and inhabited by nearly 99 million people. The code of conduct governing the relations of the princely states with the British Government was, therefore, different from that which governed the relations between provinces and the British Government. In the case of the provinces, the authority of the British Government was direct; it was exercised through the British Parliament, the Secretary of State for India, Governor General in Council or Provincial Governors. In the case of the princely states, the authority was indirectly exercised by various treaties, engagements and *sanads*, supplemented by usage and sufferance.

British Prime Minister Clement Attlee announced in the House of Commons in February 1946, that a Parliamentary delegation

would visit India with a view to meeting the national leaders and discuss various problems connected with self-government in India. All members of the Cabinet Mission belonged to the British Government and consisted of Lord Pethick Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. AV Alexander. They arrived in India on March 23, 1946, and held meetings with four representatives, two each of the Congress and the Muslim League. But the conference failed to devise an agreed formula and the Mission announced its own proposals in the State Paper of May 16, 1946. Their plan rejected the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan and proposed a federal union of India, including British India and Indian princely states. It provided for the establishment of a Constitutional Assembly to frame the future Constitution of India, which was to be based on the principle that the 'Centre' would control only three subjects, viz, foreign affairs, defence and communications. All other subjects were to be administered by autonomous provinces and states.

It was proclaimed by the secretary of state for India that paramountcy was to lapse after India had achieved independence and that the future relationship of the states with the rest of India was to be decided by the parties themselves, through consultations and negotiations. In the meantime, 200 delegates of All India State People's Conference, representing the people of princely states from all over India, met to discuss the Cabinet Mission Plan on June 8–11, 1946. During his speech in the meeting, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru insisted on democratisation of the states in order to bring them at par with the rest of India. He said, "Rulers alone cannot decide the fate of nearly 100 million people."[1]

The Cabinet Mission Plan was accepted by the princes, but they wanted to make some proposals during interim period. These proposals had no relevance to issues concerning the people of the states, but mostly concerned their own future. The situation, however, changed when the Muslim League, after joining the Interim

Government at the Centre, refused to join the Constitutional Assembly and continued to insist on its demand for Pakistan. It was felt all over the country and in England that events in India were leading towards a dangerous impasse. In order to face the situation effectively, the British Government appointed Lord Viscount Mountbatten in place of Lord Wavell as Governor General of India.

Lord Mountbatten, plunged himself into the negotiations with the leaders of different political parties and announced that long before June 1948, the Dominions of India and Pakistan would be established and that the question of princely states would be dealt with in the light of the Cabinet Mission's memorandum of May 12, 1946. Accordingly, to approve the British plan, a meeting between Mountbatten and several Indian leaders was held on June 2, 1947. It was approved on June 3. The plan stated, "While paramountcy will lapse, according to His Majesty's Government's declaration of May 12 and 16, 1946, His Majesty's Government will not enter into military or any other agreement with the Indian (princely) states."[2]

Deteriorating communal situation in the country, coupled with haze created by the fast changing political developments, created an impression in most princely states that the lapse of paramountcy meant independent status for them and they could either join the Constitution Assembly or remain independent. Seeing this attitude of the rulers, Pandit Nehru said on June 15, 1947, in the All India Congress Committee: "We will not recognise the independence of the states in India and any recognition of such independence by any foreign power will be considered as unfriendly act." Mr. Jinnah contested this view. On June 17,1947, he said, "Constitutionally and legally, the Indian states will be independent sovereign states on the termination of paramountcy and they will be free to decide for themselves and adopt any course they like; it is open to them to join the Hindustan Constitutional Assembly or decide to remain

independent. In case they opt for independence, they would enter into such agreements or relationships with Hindustan or Pakistan as they may choose."[3]

Throughout the negotiations on the Cabinet Mission proposals, as well as the subsequent question of partition and transfer of power, the eventual fate of princely states and right of their people was never lost sight of by the Congress. Assurances were extracted by Congress from the British Government that on the lapse of paramountcy, the princes would not become sovereign rulers. "Sovereignty must reside in the people and not in any individual. The claim of the State People's Conference to represent the people of the princely states is justified and we will see to it that they are heard. And certainly their rulers cannot speak for them," said Nehru on June 8, 1947, before the delegates of State People's Conference."[4] The application of the principle of partition to the states had been rejected by the Indian National Congress and it had consistently supported and pleaded for letting the people of these states to determine their affiliation. Sheikh Abdullah's views were similar.

In March 1946, Sheikh Abdullah sent a memorandum to the British Cabinet Mission, stating, "The fate of Kashmir nation is in the balance and in that hour of decision we demand our basic democratic right to send our selected representatives to the constitution making bodies that will construct the frame work of free India. We emphatically repudiate the right of the princely order to represent the people of Indian states or their right to nominate their personal representatives as our spokesmen."[5] Whereas Congress consistently supported the cause of the people of the states to determine their relations with the dominions; the Muslim League's attitude towards them was hostile. British rejected the very idea of letting people of the states to determine their own affiliation. On the other hand it vested the princes with that power after the paramountcy was restored to them.

By and large, the demographic and geographical contiguity itself seemed to make this choice easier and workable. Kalat and Bhawalpur, the two Muslim majority states fell within the boundaries of Pakistan and the remaining princely states, with predominantly Hindu majority, came within the geographical limits of India. Nevertheless, the accession of Bhawalpur was forced on the ruler of the state by Pakistan. This is borne out by the proceedings of West Pakistan High Court. Similarly, the Khan of Kalat revolted against accession and was arrested and detained in 1958 by Pakistan authorities.

Jammu and Kashmir was, however, a peculiar case in itself. It was a Muslim majority state that bordered both the dominions, India and Pakistan. Nevertheless, its minorities (quarter of its population), along with Kashmiri Muslims (more than half of Muslim population of the state) under the leadership of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, had made a common cause with the All India States People's Conference and had been opposed to Jinnah's 'two-nation theory'. Therefore, the Congress had presumed that all of them would support the inclusion of Jammu and Kashmir in the Indian dominion. In the haste to quit India, the British left certain issues vague and ambiguous. On the one hand, they made it clear to the princes that they would not be admitted to the British Commonwealth, and on the other, the Viceroy gave assurance to the princes that Britain would consider any offer of bilateral relations. This created an impression that perhaps, Britain was not averse to providing assistance to any princely state that did not want to affiliate itself with any of the two dominions. However, as events unfolded, by the time the British left, all princely states except, Jammu and Kashmir, Hyderabad and Junagarh had acceded to India or Pakistan.

Jinnah was confident that not taking the wishes of their subjects into consideration, Muslim rulers of predominantly Hindu states, like Hyderabad and Junagarh would opt to accede to Pakistan. He also felt that some other Hindu rulers of predominantly Hindu states,

from whom he had received positive feelers, would thus be facilitated to accede to Pakistan without having to take into consideration the wishes of their subjects. This became apparent when Jinnah made the following observations, as far back as 1940: "The only important states which matter are not in the eastern but the ones in the north-western. They are Kashmir, Bahawalpur, Patiala, etc. If these states willingly agree to come into the federation of the Muslim Homeland, we shall be glad to come to a reasonable and honorable settlement with them. We, however, have no desire to force them or coerce them in any way."[6]

As far as Jammu and Kashmir was concerned, he felt that its Muslim majority and geographical contiguity to Pakistan will compel it to be part of Pakistan, irrespective of what the Maharaja did or did not do. As Lt Gen SK Sinha (Retd), the former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir said during one of his speeches, "Jinnah wanted that on the withdrawal of the British power from the sub-continent and the lapse of paramouncy, the rulers should be allowed to decide the future of their kingdoms. His hidden agenda was that Hyderabad, which was the richest and largest state in India, of the size of France, and which had a Muslim ruler with over 90 per cent Hindu subjects, would opt for Pakistan. He even tried to get the Maharajas of Jodhpur and Jaisalmer to accede to Pakistan, promising them the world. As for Kashmir, which had 70 per cent Muslim population with a Hindu ruler, he was confident that both geography and demography were favourable for Pakistan and the State would fall like a ripe plum in his lap."

Irrespective of the stands adopted by the Congress or the Muslim League, the legal position was that the partition of India was confined to British India. The decision regarding the princely states' future was to be determined by the rulers of these states without any reference to the religious composition of the population of the States. The British government's announcement of June 3, 1947, made it amply clear.

It is ironic that Pakistan insisted on self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, when all along it had opposed the Congress' open stand to allow the people of the princely states to determine their affiliation, rather than allow their rulers to do so. Pakistan took this stand knowingly and with a purpose. According to its calculation, considering the existing situation in Junagarh and Hyderabad, both their Muslim rulers were expected to accede to Pakistan. And as far as Jammu and Kashmir was concerned, it supported the Maharaja, who they felt was not keen to join India, but wanted to remain independent. Accordingly, Pakistan conveyed these sentiments to the Maharaja. As a result of this stand adopted by the Muslim League, its proxy in the State, the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, openly declared its support for an independent Jammu and Kashmir. It is a different matter that Pakistan had to soon change its stand after the Maharaja signed a 'Standstill Agreement' (see page 198-205) with it. Pakistan now openly asked for the State's accession to it.

With the passing of Indian Independence Act 1947, all the states were released from their obligations to the Crown. They became free to align their future with either of two Dominions. Negotiations held on Cabinet Mission proposal of 1946, and the transfer of power and Independence Act 1947, made it evident that if Indian states became separate independent entities, it would create a serious problem between the Central Government and the States; this would adversely affect not only political but also economic and other relations between the two. Taking into consideration these problems, Heartley Showcross, the Under Secretary of States for India, in a speech, emphatically maintained that the British Government would not recognise any state as a separate international entity, and British Prime Minister, Clement Atlee, speaking on India Independence Bill, hoped that no irrevocable decision to stay out prematurely will be taken.

Accordingly, State Department of Government of India was set up on June 27, 1947, to deal with matters concerning states. It was divided into two sections; the Indian section was headed by a Congress leader, Sardar Patel, and the Pakistani section by a Muslim League leader, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar. Sardar Patel issued an agenda for the conference of rulers of princely states to be held on July 25, 1947. It included, firstly; accession of the states on defence, external affairs and communications, and secondly; Standstill Agreement. The two sections of the state department were also tasked with laying down the provisions/procedures for the accession of princely states to the two dominions, as the Indian Independence Act had not done so, specifically. It was enthusiastically welcomed by states. The same was repeated by Lord Mountbatten in his capacity as Crown Representative, when the special session of Chamber of Princes[7] was held on July 25, 1947. He assured the princes that their accession on these three subjects would involve no financial liability and that in other matters; there would be no encroachment on their sovereignty. Finally, he appealed to them to join any one of the two dominions before August 15, 1947.

In order to expedite the work, the Negotiating Committee of Chamber of Princes prepared the draft of Instrument of Accession and Standstill Agreement which were approved by the General Conference of the Chamber of Princes on August 1, 1947. The Standstill Agreement, vide Independence Act, Section 7, Sub-section 1(c), envisaged that till new agreements were made, all existing agreements and administrative arrangements would continue. This would ensure the temporary continuation of existing provisions concerning posts and telegraphs, transit, communications and customs, to ensure that existing administrative arrangements did not suffer as a result of the changes forced on these matters by the partition of India. The provision also envisaged that any dispute concerning this issue would be settled by arbitration and as stated

"nothing in this agreement includes the exercise of any paramountcy functions." It was felt during the conference that some rulers were inclined to execute the Standstill Agreement but were inclined to wait before executing the Instrument of Accession. It was, however, made clear to such rulers that the Government of India had decided to execute Standstill Agreement with only those who had already signed the Instrument of Accession. Therefore, the only agreements which constituted the basis of relationship between the Indian states and the successor government in British India were the Instrument of Accession and the Standstill Agreement. Thus, before August 15, 1947, all the states except Hyderabad, Junagarh and Kashmir had acceded, either to India or to Pakistan.

Hyderabad, the largest (but landlocked), richest and the most powerful of the Indian states, had a Muslim ruler, the Nizam, reputed to be the richest man in the world (rumoured at that time to be negotiating with the Portugese to buy Goa in order to have an access to sea). Nizam presided over a state whose Muslim population, which favoured accession with Pakistan, was less than 10 per cent of the entire state; while the majority, who were Hindus, favored accession with Indian Union. The Nizam's backbone was the Muslim elite of the state that was prosperous, rich and relatively sophisticated. A powerful minority under the leadership of Kasim Rizvi wanted an independent Muslim state of Hyderabad, and was aggressively hostile to Indian Union. His armed Muslim *Razakars*, numbering nearly a lakh, and youth brigade armed with an assortment of weapons, posed a serious threat to the people living within the territory of Indian Union. The Government of Hyderabad failed to check the frequent raids of these *Razakars* and the militant communists of Telangana into the territorial boundaries of India. Nizam's indecisiveness in such a crisis situation made matters worse.

The Nizam did not follow the advice given to him by Mountbatten to accede to India before August 15, 1947. On the

other hand, he procrastinated by appointing a brilliant negotiator, Sir Walter Moncton to extract as many concessions for his state from India as possible, before deciding to accede to it. In the process, he allowed the matters to drift. This let the initiative shift into the hands of Kasim Rizvi and his band of armed *Razakars*. "Rizvi was the type of *thug* who flourishes in conditions of uncertainty; his followers were undisciplined, highly communal and took advantage of any opportunity to oppress and threaten the majority Hindu population."[8] With every passing day the press carried a steady stream of reports that pointed to the increasingly violent activities of these *Razakars*. All these reports increased the pressure on the Indian government to bring an end to Hyderabad's pretentions. Pakistan's attitude was not helpful either. For purely communal reasons, as also because of the pressure exerted by a large number of Hyderabadi refugees occupying high places in Pakistan, it grossly misrepresented facts to its own people and even exaggerated the chances of Hyderabad offering stiff resistance to India.

In the meantime, on November 1, 1947, Mountbatten flew to Lahore to meet Jinnah to resolve the conflict in Kashmir which had begun by then. He presented the formula "which stated that the Governments of India and Pakistan agree that where the ruler of the state does not belong to the community to which the majority of his subjects belong and where the state has not acceded to that dominion whose majority community is the same as the state's, the question whether the state should finally accede to one or the other of dominions should, in all cases, be decided by an impartial reference to the will of the people." Jinnah replied that "a plebiscite was redundant and undesirable. He also refused to include Hyderabad in the reckoning." Pakistan knew very well that if Indian invasion came, it was in no position to intervene militarily (a leading Karachi daily *Dawn* had warned the Pakistani authorities of the true value of its 'Trojan Horse' inside Indian

Territory.) Sardar Patel, who was holding fort in Delhi in the absence of Nehru, who was on a trip abroad, did not pay heed to the advice rendered by his Army Chief, Sir Roy Buchher, who had warned Sardar that opening another front in Hyderabad when the Indian troops were embroiled in Kashmir, was fraught with danger.

The strength of the Hyderabad State's army was reported to be 30,000 strong, supported by some tanks and artillery and led by an able Turkish General, Al Androos. In the mean time, reports were pouring in that some British mercenaries, involved in gun-running, were bringing in weapons from Pakistan into Hyderabad. Sardar Patel felt that India could not let this state of uncertainty to continue any longer. Having been assured by General Carriappa that he would defend the Kashmir front under all circumstances, the Sardar ordered the army into Hyderabad. Within a week the resistance was overcome by General Chaudhary's troops, who subdued the *Razakars*. True to their reputation, the *Razakars* disintegrated. The Nizam consented to accede to the Indian Union. Ironically, the Hyderabad action also brought a great relief to Pakistan government, as it could now devote time to its own affairs.

In Junagarh, 85 per cent of its total population of 700,000 was Hindu, though its ruler was a Muslim. Around 279 Kathiawar states encircled it geographically. The ruler had declared that it would go along with the decision of these encircling states, as far as the matter of accession was concerned. Besides these, there were some autonomous states within Junagarh which had announced their accession to India and as a result, had asked India for protection. There were two other relevant factors that could not be lost sight of. First, at no point was the state contiguous with Pakistan, and secondly, its railways, posts and telegraph were deeply integrated with the Indian communication network systems. To pre-empt any decision that the Nawab of Junagarh might take on accession to

India, a successful *coup de tat* was carried out by a group of pro-Pakistan Sindhi Muslims on August 10, 1947, under the leadership of Bhutto (father of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, late prime minister of Pakistan). The Nawab became a virtual prisoner in his palace. On September 15, 1947, he eventually acceded to Pakistan.

Nevertheless, it would have been a geographical monstrosity if the accession to Pakistan had come about. To end this farce, the volunteers of the local *Arzee Hukumat* (temporary government) rushed into the state and chased away the Nawab. Even though India had stationed troops outside Junagarh, it did not, at any stage, feel the necessity of intervening militarily, as the popular uprising against the Nawab forced him to flee to Pakistan by the end of October. Later, the Prime Minister of Junagarh wrote to Jinnah explaining the difficulties of Junagarh. He also requested the Government of India to take over the administration, which was done on November 9, 1947. Subsequently, a plebiscite was held on February 24, 1948. An overwhelming majority voted for accession to India. In January 1949, Junagarh was finally merged with Saurashtra, which was a union of princely states of Kathiawar.

Consequent to the application of Government of India Independence Act, Maharaja Hari Singh, was now solely responsible to decide the future of the state. Before the announcement of Radcliffe Award, Mountbatten visited Srinagar on June 19, 1947, and spent four days there. During his parleys with the Maharaja, Mountbatten conveyed to him and his Prime Minister, RC Kak that, "the newly created State Department of India was prepared to give an assurance that if Kashmir went to Pakistan, this would not be regarded as an unfriendly act by the Government of India."[9] Similar sentiment was recorded by Philip Zeigler when he quoted Mountbatten to have told the Maharaja that, "Sardar Patel had assured him that if the choice of the people of the state were to be for Pakistan, Indian Government would not object to it. However,

Jinnah, with an eye on Hyderabad, was firm that in princely states, the decision about the future was the exclusive right of the Ruler and people had no role in the matter."[10] Jinnah was too ambitious; he felt he could have Kashmir because it had a Muslim majority and Hyderabad because it had a Muslim ruler. According to M Asghar Khan (former Chief of Pakistan Air Force during 1965 war with India) who was quoted by English daily *Dawn* to have said "It is on record that Vallabhbhai Patel, the powerful minister in Jawahar Lal Nehru's government, had offered to Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan in 1947, that Pakistan should keep Kashmir and let India have Hyderabad. This offer was refused. Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan and presumably, the Quaid-e-Azam, felt that they could have both, Kashmir, because it had a Muslim majority, and Hyderabad because it had a Muslim ruler."[11]

The Maharaja did not heed Mountbatten's advice, nor did he accede to India before August 14, 1947. Had he done so, it would have legally and factually brought to an end the whole matter of accession. While speaking before the East India Association in London, after his return there, Mountbatten, in order to clear his position on the issue, explains it thus, "In case of Kashmir I went up personally and saw the Maharaja. I spent four days with him… I persisted with the same advice: 'Ascertain the will of your people by any means and join whichever dominion your people wish to join by August 14, this year.' He did not do that… Had he acceded to Pakistan before August 14, the future Government of India had allowed me to give His Highness an assurance that no objection, whatever, would be raised by them. Had His Highness acceded to India by August 14, 1947, Pakistan did not exist, and therefore, could not have interfered. The only trouble that could have been raised was by non-accession to either side, and this was unfortunately the very course followed by the Maharaja."[12]

Maharaja's position was none too happy either, as he faced a

great dilemma. On the one hand, the option of joining Pakistan foreclosed itself; firstly, because a Hindu ruler could not be safe in a theocratic Muslim state; and more importantly, such a decision would have gone against the wishes of his people. These wishes were clearly represented by the NC led by Sheikh Abdullah, who by then, had emerged as the undisputed leader of Kashmir. On the other hand, accession to India would result in his not only losing his throne, but would also bring his *bête noire*, Sheikh Abdullah, to power. Nehru had, in the meanwhile, divested Sardar Patel of the Kashmir portfolio and had shifted it to External Affairs Ministry, which he himself headed. The Maharaja now had to deal with Nehru, whom he considered the alter ego of his nemesis, Sheikh Abdullah. Besides, Nehru was not too well-disposed towards the Maharaja, in fact any Maharaja for that matter. As Walter Crocker, Australia's High Commissioner in India in early sixties, writes in his book, *Nehru: A Contemporary's Estimate*. It reveals that among other things, Maharajas also fell in the category of Nehru's 'blind hates'. Crocker mentions that among Nehru's prejudices were, "Maharajas, Portugal, money lenders, certain American ways, Hinduism and the whites in Africa…"[13] The Maharaja, therefore prevaricated.

To make matters worse, the British played their own games. Some British officials sincerely believed that Hari Singh would opt for an arrangement in which he was not required to accede to any of the dominions, if he was guaranteed peace on his frontiers. Therefore, with the support and active cooperation of his Prime Minister, R.C. Kak, and his *Raj Guru*, Sant Dev, who exercised great influence on him, he toyed with the idea of independence. Some historians claim that his Prime Minister had actually assured the British that Hari Singh would pursue a policy which would enable him to retain his independence rather than join India. For the Maharaja to have allowed his coterie, the geography and demography of the state,

and the British encouragement to convince him that he would be allowed to live in splendid isolation to enjoy the paradise on earth as its independent ruler, was to overlook the lessons of history. And, more importantly, he overlooked the geo-political compulsions of the major powers of the post-colonial and post-war era, that had already divided the world into two irreconcilable blocks in the newly begun cold war. Be it as it may, his ambivalence had disastrous consequences for the state in particular, and for the whole sub-continent in general.

To tide over the immediate crisis, the Maharaja offered a 'Standstill Agreement' to both India and Pakistan on August 12, 1947. This would allow the routine administrative facilities and normal amenities of life, such as post office, communications, etc., to run smoothly, till he took a final decision. Pakistan immediately accepted the agreement on August 15, through a telegraphic communication. But the Government of India asked the Prime Minister of the state to fly to Delhi to negotiate the agreement; or to send any other authorised minister for the purpose. The non-acceptance of the Standstill Agreement by India immediately, aroused suspicion in the minds of Pakistan and it complained that India's failure to conclude the agreement was indicative of some plan to affect the accession immediately. However, its contention that India wanted accession and therefore, did not sign Standstill Agreement was totally untenable. Had that been its intention, it would have concluded the Standstill Agreement without wasting any time as a prelude to accession proper. Pakistan thought that by accepting agreement, it was in a better position to persuade the state to accede to it. In the process, it totally forgot that it was purely provisional in nature aimed at facilitating the continuance of the existing administrative functions of routine nature, pending final accession. Pakistan signed the Agreement, hoping to upstage India, but felt dissatisfied when it learnt that it guaranteed only the continuation

of existing administrative arrangements, without prejudice to the signing of the 'Instrument of Accession'. Sheikh Abdullah attributed India's non-acceptance of Standstill Agreement offered by the Maharaja, to the belief that "it could not consider any agreement entered into by the Government of the State valid until it had the approval of the people's representatives."[14]

While decisions taken (or not taken) by the Maharaja or for that matter by India and Pakistan, were creating a situation of uncertainty, the British were working to a plan. Secret documents declassified recently clearly establish the British plan to divide the country before they left, with the specific aim to retain a foothold in the north-west of the country. This open secret so exasperated Krishna Menon that he mentioned it to Mountbatten, "Is this frontier (North West of India abutting Afghanistan and Iran) still the hinterland of imperial strategy? Does Britain still think in terms of being able to use this territory and all that follows from it?"[15] As a consequence, Britain was in a hurry to implement its plans before it was too late, as "Jinnah was in the terminal stage of tuberculosis: a closely guarded secret. The British Intelligence knew about it and this fact influenced the pre-poning (sic) of the grant of independence from 1948 to 1947."[16] Therefore, with Mountbatten in a hurry to leave, August 14, 1947, saw the birth of a new Muslim State, Pakistan, in the Indian sub-continent. This was followed by India getting independence the next day, i.e. August 15, 1947.

No one seemed to have any time for the Maharaja due to the cataclysmic events that accompanied the partition of the country, which left more than half a million people dead in the communal holocaust that accompanied it. Or, to put it differently, the Maharaja took advantage of the pre-occupation of the two governments with the communal holocaust and history's greatest mass exodus that the maelstrom had created. He did not want to exercise his option immediately, as he found himself on the horns of dilemma, created

as much by the number of existing contradictions, as also by his own ambivalence and lack of clarity.

Pakistan has, on many occasions, accused India of having planned the forceful acquisition of Jammu and Kashmir, irrespective of which way the Maharaja would tilt. In support of this thesis, it points out that Radcliff had awarded the district of Gurdaspur, which had a slight Muslim majority, to India. This, according to Pakistan, was done to provide an alternate link between Jammu and India in place of the only other communication link to the state which, after partition, would be through Pakistan. It further accuses India of starting work on the construction of the road between Pathankot (in Gurdaspur district) and Jammu, and establishing a boat bridge over a major obstacle like River Ravi, immediately after Gandhi returned from his trip to Kashmir in July 1947. (Incidentally, this top secret project had remained under wraps till news about it first appeared in a newspaper published by Kashmiri Pandit Sabha!)

It is preposterous to suggest that Radcliff buckled under Indian pressure to award Gurdaspur to India. The above-mentioned link could not have been established without the express consent of the Maharaja. If he was keen on accession with India at that stage, he was free and had all the powers under the Independence Act to do so. As mentioned earlier, for their own geo-strategic reasons, partition of the country was a necessary pre-requisite for the British before they left India. Therefore, they had carried out a detailed assessment of the geographical division of the country. As early as January 29, 1946, Lord Wavell was reminded by his Secretary of State in London, about his blue print for partition through a telegram, which stated, "It would help me to know when I may expect to receive your recommendation as regards definition of genuinely Muslim areas, if we are compelled to give a decision to this (partition)."[17] Lord Wavell's partition plan forwarded to London on February 6/7, 1946, has this to say about Gurdaspur District, "...In the Punjab, the only Muslim majority district that would not go into

Pakistan under demarcation is Gurdaspur. Gurdaspur must go with Amritsar for geographical reasons and Amritsar being the sacred city of Sikhs must stay out of Pakistan…"[18]

From perusal of other records and happenings, some of which have been recorded here, it is clear that India had actually resigned itself to Kashmir eventually becoming part of Pakistan. In 1940, Muslim League propounded the name for an independent and a separate country as '*Pak-i-stan*' (*Pak*-meaning 'pure'; i-meaning 'of'; and *stan*-meaning land – Land of the Pure). As an explanation for what the new name stood for, it proclaimed that each alphabet in the name 'Pakistan' stood for something distinct; 'P' for Punjab, 'A' for Afghan, the inhabitants of North West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), 'K' for Kashmir, 'S' for Sindh, and 'Tan'(corruption of Hindi word *sthan*, meaning place) the last three letters of Baluchistan. The Indian National Congress did not protest despite an open political interpretation of the alphabet 'K' in the name of Pakistan.

The dispatch with which India airlifted its troops into Kashmir has also been attributed to India's prior planning for military intervention in the state. This accusation was forcefully refuted by all the three Chiefs of Indian Army, Navy and Air Force, namely General R.M. Lockhart, Air Marshal T.W. Elmhirst and Rear Admiral J.T.S. Hall respectively (all three of whom were British officers). In a joint statement issued by the three highest ranking officers of the three services, they gave a day to day account of the activities of their forces that clearly nailed this lie (full text available in *Asiatic Review*, Vol. 45, January 1949, p. 469, under the topic 'Kashmir' written by General Sir Frank Messervy). Besides, saving Kashmir and the state was a touch and go affair, as the troops from 1 SIKH established contact with the raiders when they were barely four and a half miles from the airfield, which they were in the process of encircling at that time. If India had done any prior planning, it would not have come so

close to losing Kashmir, as the capture of the airfield by the raiders would have sealed the fate of the state, perhaps for good.

The fact is that this accusation is an afterthought, because Pakistan's grand plan to capture Kashmir failed miserably.

For India as well as Pakistan, Kashmir did not only represent dispute over territory, but much more. To Indian National Congress, it represented the core of national unity based on common history of cultures and customs of its diverse people, dating back to centuries. As Vincent Smith said, "India beyond all doubt possesses a deep underlying fundamental unity, far more profound than that produced either by geographical isolation or by political suzerainty. That unity transcends the innumerable diversities of blood, colour, language, dress, manners and sect."[19] Nehru did not overlook the differences between Hindus and Muslims. However, he attributed these to dispute over sharing the spoils of power, created by the British, in keeping with their principle of *divide et imperia*.

On the other hand, Jinnah had no time for such philosophy. He believed that Hinduism and Islam were not just two distinct religions but two distinct social orders, which could not be welded into one nation. He went as far as to suggest that they belonged to two different civilisations, based on conflicting ideas. To him the Hindu-Muslim unity was a mirage as the differences between the two had created bitter sentiments resulting in unbridgeable gulf between the two. To him "The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs and literatures. They neither inter-marry nor inter-dine and, indeed, they belong to two different civilisations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions."[20] Nehru believed in 'unity in diversity', and Jinnah disbelieved political unity due to conflicting ideas.

There appeared no meeting ground between the two, who held in their hands the fate of the two nations. The difference between

the two is summed up by no less than one of sub-continent's greatest poets, Allama Iqbal, who said to Nehru in 1938, a few months before his (Iqbal's) death, "What is there in common between Jinnah and you? He is a politician, you are a patriot."[21] Nehru also gave vent to his frustration with Jinnah on another occasion, when he gave a dinner in honour of the United Nations Commission in July 1948. Joseph Korbel quotes Nehru as having told him, "Jinnah abandoned us (the National Congress) thirty years ago and founded the League — not to defend Islam, as he asserts, but to defend privileged materialistic rights. It has nothing to do with religion; he himself is not a religious man."[22]

As the Maharaja mulled over his future, time did not stand still. Horrifying events accompanying the partition brought about a definite shift in Maharaja's thinking. He became concerned with the safety of the minorities in a predominantly Muslim state. He was now keen to accede to India, but Nehru would have none of it. Right from September 1947, onwards, Maharaja made all efforts to see that India accepted the accession of his state, but Nehru wanted to put the cart before the horse; in that, he wanted the Maharaja to handover power to Sheikh Abdullah, who would then hold an election and only after that, India would accept the accession. The Maharaja, by wanting to implement the reverse of it, was actually in tune with the provisions of the Indian Independence Act. Nehru procrastinated and in the process wasted precious time, till it was too late. The Pakistan sponsored and Jinnah approved tribal invasion was well on its way and Nehru and future generations will be left to rue his indecision, because as time would tell, they would have to pay a heavy price in the years to come.

As a grand strategy to prepare the ground for an invasion of the state, Pakistan clearly violated the procedure laid down by the Indian Independence Act for the transfer of power in India. Having been emboldened by the success of its 'Direct Action' launched in 1946, to

force the issue of partition, it now indulged in vicious propaganda to raise the religious passions of Muslims of the state by indulging in communal rhetoric of the worst kind. Success of 'Direct Action' had also made Jinnah over-confident about getting what he desired. Ignoring the Kashmiri leadership completely, neither he nor Liaqat Ali Khan, or for that matter, anyone in authority in Pakistan, made any effort to contact either Sheikh Abdullah or the Maharaja. On the other hand, when Kashmir seemed to be slipping away from their grasp, they unleashed the tribal raiders to get it by force. As M Asghar Khan writes in *Dawn* "...that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the Chief Minister of Kashmir, asked to see the Quaid-e-Azam in 1947, but was not given an interview. It is also known that the Maharaja of Kashmir was indecisive about acceding to India or to Pakistan. Without making any efforts to make contact with him, Khan Abdul Qayum Khan, the Chief Minister of NWFP, was allowed to unleash a tribal invasion of the State. With the approval of the Pakistan government, regular Pakistan Army officers and men were allowed to join the government sponsored tribal attack on the Valley."[23]

Pakistan Decides to Grab Kashmir by Force

In September 47, an over-confident Pakistan, eager to get Kashmir at the earliest, approved of a secret plan to disperse the State Forces of Jammu and Kashmir by manipulating skirmishes at several points along the border and then launch a full scale offensive. As a prelude to the invasion, Pakistan fomented trouble in the Muslim majority districts of Jammu region which resulted in large-scale killing and uprooting of Hindus and Sikhs. Some estimates put the death toll at 30,000, with another 100, 000 migrating to Srinagar and Jammu (still awaiting rehabilitation).

On September 4, 1947, the British Chief of Staff of Jammu and Kashmir State Forces submitted a report to the State Government,

stating that on September 2 and 3, 1947, armed Muslim residents, mainly of Rawalpandi district in Pakistan, had infiltrated into the state. On receipt of this report the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir sent a prompt telegram to the Chief Minister of West Punjab on September 4, 1947, requesting him to take prompt action. The deputy commissioner of Rawalpandi replied to this note on behalf of the Chief Minister, West Punjab, denying that the raiders had moved into Kashmir. "No infiltration has been seen by any of my officers or village officials anywhere at various points. I do not expect any trouble of any kind." On September 9, 1947, the Jammu and Kashmir Government, in a further communication, this time to the Deputy Commissioner, Rawalpindi, repeated the charges, urging immediate action. Many more telegrams were exchanged, but Pakistan denied knowledge of any invasion.

Pakistan suggested negotiations between the representatives of Jammu and Kashmir and itself. The Jammu and Kashmir Government reiterated its demand that infiltration should stop before any discussions could begin. The Prime Minister repeated "...shall gladly discuss matters when this trouble is controlled." But it did not change the attitude of Pakistan, and ultimately the Government of Jammu and Kashmir conveyed to Pakistan that if raids were not stopped and blockade of essential commodities not lifted immediately, it would be left with no alternative but to seek help from others to protect the life and the property of his subjects. This made Pakistan suspect that the State might ask for assistance from India, as a prelude to its eventual accession to the Indian Dominion. On October 19, 1947, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan wrote to Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, "We are astonished to hear your threat to ask for assistance, presumably meaning thereby assistance from an outside power. The only object of this intervention by an outside power, secured by you, would be to complete the process of suppressing the Muslims to enable you to join the Indian Dominion." Jinnah,

Governor General of Pakistan, reiterated the same. It appears that the Pakistan Government at this stage was attempting to apply pressure on the Maharaja.

While all this was happening, the Indian government failed to see through this stratagem, at least, in its formative phase. "Indian leaders did not even get the wind of the secret preparations in Pakistan for military intervention in the Jammu and Kashmir State, in the name of the *Jehad* for the liberation of the Muslims from their subjection to the Dogra rule. While Gandhi went on an indefinite fast to prevent communal violence in India, which threatened the Muslims, Pakistan prepared feverishly for the invasion of the state. He did not know that an armed rebellion was being encouraged in the Muslim majority districts of the Jammu province, where arms and ammunition were being dumped by the elements of the Muslim League from across the border of the state with the Punjab. Pakistan planned to reduce the state by military force and then, deal with India from a position of strength, as far as the states of Junagarh and Hyderabad were concerned."[24] Writing about the preparations underway in Pakistan to grab Kashmir militarily, Vincent Sheean mentions in his book, *Nehru-10 Years of Power*, "...By early September of that year (1947), the Pathan tribesmen had been converging on the borders of Jammu and Kashmir State and the western part of Jammu (Poonch area) was soon in their hands. In mid October they began the infiltration of Kashmir proper armed with modern equipment which could only have come from the Army."

Pakistan's other important consideration of launching the tribal invasion of Kashmir was to achieve multiple objectives in one stroke. During their rule of the Indian sub-continent lasting 200 years, the British, despite the availability of enormous resources, a modern and efficient army and a well-oiled administrative network, could not effectively subdue the restless and volatile tribals in its North Western Frontier Agency (NWFP),

inhabited by warlike tribes of Afridi, Wazirs, Mehsuds, Pashtuns and Swatis. The British had used the carrot and stick approach towards these turbulent tribes; resorting to violence on one hand and spending millions of rupees in appeasing them on the other, without much success. When the British left, Pakistan inherited the problem. Having carved out Pakistan in the name of Islam and for the emancipation of Muslims of the sub-continent, it could not use the British tactics of employing force against their co-religionists to subdue them. Such tactics would expose them to ridicule in front of the whole world. And they could also not afford to spend their limited resources on them to keep them in good humour. To add to their woes, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan had started his movement in NWFP to achieve an autonomous Pashtunisthan. Such a movement had the potential of uniting the Pashtuns of Pakistan and of neighbouring Afghanistan in a rebellion against the nascent nation. This would have sounded a death knell to the idea of 'two-nation theory' that provided the ideological justification to Jinnah for carving out Pakistan.

Therefore, the tribals were to be diverted to something more attractive, if Pakistan was to be spared the resultant ravages of their likely revolt, just when the new Muslim nation had taken birth. They were promised plenty of land, bountiful of goodies and much more, if they embarked upon *Jehad* to liberate Kashmir, where they were told, the Hindus were perpetrating gruesome atrocities on the Muslims. By spreading this falsehood, the tribesmen were worked to a feverish pitch before being launched on this mission. "They were led by seasoned soldiers who had been demobilised from the British Indian Army. They organised the smuggling of arms. Messengers were sent to the tribal areas of NWFP, where manufacturing of small arms and ammunition had been practiced for years."[25] Sardar Mohammad Ibrahim Khan, a young Kashmiri, played a significant role in arousing the communal passions of his co-religionists for

waging *Jehad* in Kashmir. Later, he laid the foundation for creating the movement for 'Liberation of Kashmir', which subsequently grew into 'Azad Kashmir Government'.

Pakistan saw in the whole enterprise a win-win situation. They felt that this way they could secure Kashmir, finish off the Pashtunistan movement and divert the tribal rebellion away from Pakistan. It is now well-known that Jinnah had not expected his dream of creating Pakistan to fructify so soon, nor had he visualised the great administrative difficulties that the new nation would face in those chaotic initial days after the partition. Besides, his own sickness did not help matters. He rarely ventured out of Karachi except to visit Quetta, whose climate suited his state of physical health. As a result he did not get involved with the day to day running of the fledgeling state. No one will probably know for sure the extent of Jinnah's responsibility for launching the invasion of Jammu and Kashmir. From various historical records, interviews by those who were close to him and through various newspaper reports, it can safely be said that Jinnah was taken into consideration, only when all planning and preparations were over and execution had either commenced or was about to begin.

The invasion was planned and executed by Liaqat Ali Khan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, who also held the defence portfolio, and his close group of confidants, namely Iskander Mirza, the Defence Secretary (later President of Pakistan), Khan Abdul Qayum Khan, the Chief Minister of NWFP and Ishaq Ahmed Khan (later President of Pakistan), who as the provincial civil servant, was on the staff of the Chief Minister. According to Jinnah's secretary, KH Khursheed, who was a Kashmiri himself, "it appeared that Jinnah was informed of the invasion plan only a few days before it was to be launched and was invited to be at Abbottabad for triumphal drive to Srinagar."[26] He further mentions that the "tribal invasion of Kashmir

was a criminal folly which sealed the fate of Kashmir. Pakistan's folly in permitting the tribal invasion had promoted a situation in which only the use of Indian troops could have prevented the sack of Srinagar and legally, only accession by Kashmir to India could permit their deployment."[27] Another version of the events is given by Sir George Cunningham (recorded as an entry in his diary) '1947' — it states, "Apparently Jinnah first heard of what was going on about 15 days ago. But said, "Don't tell me anything about it. My conscience must be clear."[28]

Irrespective of his level of involvement or responsibility, one fact is certain; Jinnah did not veto the move, which he could have easily done, being the paramount leader of the country. On the other hand, he not only acquiesced with the whole plan, but wanted to up the ante by using regular Pakistani troops right at the early stages of the war. After Kashmir acceded to India and Indian army moved into the state, Jinnah realised that it would be unacceptable to Pakistanis to see the subjugation of their co-religionists in Kashmir, without any attempt being made to help them. Therefore, as the Governor General of Pakistan, he had to be seen to be doing something to salvage the situation. Besides, "the mainly Muslim area of Kashmir, with Poonch as its centre, contained the headwaters of the rivers running into the west Punjab, Pakistan's main agricultural province, and which was greatly dependent on irrigation for its prosperity."[29]

"Jinnah, therefore, gave orders through the defence ministry in Karachi for regular Pakistani troops to be moved into Kashmir."[30] "He also asked the Governor of Punjab, Mudie, to pass this order on to Douglas Gracy, the acting Commander-in-Chief (due to temporary absence of Frank Messervy)."[31] Gracy received this order on October 26. There was heated exchange on the phone when Gracy did not agree. Finally, realising the serious implications of the order, he replied that he would not issue any instructions without the approval of Auchinleck, the Supreme Commander. "....Auchinleck

arrived in Lahore on the morning of October 27, 1947; he told Jinnah that to send Pakistani troops into Kashmir, now that the state had acceded to India, would constitute an act of aggression. In such circumstances, he, the Supreme Commander, would have no option but to order automatically and immediately the withdrawal of every British officer serving with the Pakistan Army."[32] Jinnah, realising that such an option would paralyse the command structure of the Pakistan army, dependent as they were on the British officers to man crucial assignments, was left with no alternative but to cancel the order. However, to overcome this technicality, the operation was made the responsibility of the local militia, called the Azad (Free) Kashmir Force, commanded by regular Pakistan army officers. As General Wilson and General Chhiber mention, "Both Masservy and Gracy were aware of the progressive reinforcement of the Azad Kashmir Forces from the regular Pakistan army. Neither, however, gave any instructions nor advice to General Tariq, who dealt directly with Iskander Mirza, the Defence Secretary, and through him, with Liaqat Ali Khan."[33]

The 1947–48 Indo-Pak war was unique in many respects. To start with, the invasion of Kashmir in October 1947, though planned at the highest level in Pakistan, had limited physical participation of Pakistan's regular army; but as the conflict wore on, it degenerated into a full-fledged war between two newly independent states. Both armies, at that time, were commanded by the British generals. In addition, India still continued with a British Governor General, Mountbatten. Bulk of the officer cadre of Pakistan army was based on British officers (700 in all) and Indian army too had a substantial number of 300 officers on its rolls. Sir Roy Bucher was the Commander-in-Chief of Indian Army and General Douglas Gracy, his Pakistani counterpart. All the three Services in both countries were also commanded by British officers. Therefore, India exercised limited sovereignty in

executing its war plans. The same could, perhaps, be said about Pakistan, but in their case, Britain's own interests coincided, to a large extent, with theirs. The British, therefore, ensured that the war was brought to an inconclusive end (as far as India was concerned), once their own objectives were met to as great an extent as possible. Chandershekhar Dasgupta, a career diplomat and author of *War and Diplomacy in Kashmir, 1947–48*, mentions in an interview with Rashmi Sehgal, "The British clearly did not want the whole of Jammu and Kashmir to go to India. There was a widespread feeling in London that if India was in control of areas contiguous to Pakistan, the latter would not survive. If the Indian army was within close striking distance of Rawalpindi, then Pakistan would face a serious problem."

The British perfidy can be gauged from the fact that the new Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, General Lockart, did not consider it important to inform India about the crucial information that he was aware of, viz. that the invading forces were on the way to Kashmir. This fact came to light two months after the invasion. He did not even carry out the instructions of providing military equipment to Maharaja's forces to enable them to resist the invaders. Consequently, he had to resign.

Despite having signed the Standstill Agreement with the Maharaja, Pakistan imposed an economic blockade on the state, cutting off supplies of essential commodities like, food-grains, salt, sugar, tea, fuels, etc. It was a clear violation of the Standstill Agreement, meant to force the Maharaja to accede to Pakistan. However, the pressure tactics did not work.

Invasion and Accession

Having created a huge scarcity of essential commodities that people needed on daily basis, Pakistan sent in its hordes before the

crack of dawn on October 22, 1947. The invading force mostly consisted of Afridis, Mehsuds, demobilised Pakistan army personnel, serving army personnel in plain clothes, desperadoes and volunteers. Equipped with modern weapons, they poured into Poonch, Mirpur, Bhimber and Kotli areas of Jammu, and Muzzafarabad, Uri and Karen sectors of Kashmir. Later, as the war wore on, these forces were organised into 32 battalions of seasoned and well-equipped army. The overall command of the force was placed with Major General Mohammad Akbar Khan, DSO. He later adopted a rather romantic name, General Tariq,[34] while leading the invasion, named 'Operation Gulmarg'. The biggest incentives offered to the tribesmen who invaded Jammu and Kashmir, were goodies like women and money, and the most potent of all motivational tools for a Muslim, the opportunity to be part of a *Jehad*. If any more justification was required to motivate the invading force, it was provided by the fact that in "Islam, every believer, wherever he may be, can serve any and all Muslim princes on the same terms and according to the same uniform law. In Islam, in consequence, the idea of frontiers has no juridical meaning...."[35]

Prithvinath Wanchoo, a young divisional engineer, was stationed at Domel, on the fateful morning of October 22, 1947, when the invasion commenced. He was awakened by his servant's hysterical shouting. Describing this incident in his book, *Betrayal in India*, DF Karaka, a famous author, writes "...Wanchoo runs barefoot into the verandah and sees the village of Nalochi across Kishenganga Bridge, in flames. The Dogra garrison, caught unawares by the suddenness of the invasion, loses its hill top positions and trenches and falls back to organise a new defensive position."[36] "No one, especially the Hindus and Sikhs, was safe before their barbarous fury. The avalanche of looting, pillaging, burning and abductions pushed irresistibly forward along Jhelum river road."[37] Andrew Whitehead records in his book *How Kashmir Crises Began — Mission in Kashmir*, "The Khan Shah

Afridi, a veteran of the invading force, said he was instructed to go to Kashmir by a Muslim holy man. 'The *Pir* told us', said Afridi, 'we will fight and we should not be afraid. It's a war between Muslims and infidels, and we will get Kashmir freed.' These ragtag *Lashkars* (Forces) were led by officers like Major Anwar Khan, a demobilised emergency commissioned officer of the Army Service Corps, who was commander of the *Lashkar* that was tasked to capture Srinagar. The only remuneration that was agreed to with the *Lashkars* was 'to loot the non-Muslims."[38] Therefore, loot and rape occurred at almost all places that fell to the invaders. However, Baramulla and Mirpur received special treatment, as would be evident from the happenings there.

Maharaja's army comprised of a total of eight infantry battalions — each having about a thousand personnel and one mountain battery. These were thinly spread out on the ground along the entire boundary with Pakistan, stretching along Mirpur, Poonch, Nowshehra, and Rajouri in Jammu and Kohala-Domel in Kashmir. Its broad deployment was in the following manner:-

- Army Headquarters at Srinagar was headed by Chief of Staff, Brigadier Rajender Singh of the State Forces. He had taken over this post after independence from his British predecessor, Major General HL Scott, CB, DSO and MC.
- He had at his disposal a total of four brigades:-
- The Jammu brigade commanded by Brigadier NS Rawat, with its Headquarters at Jammu.
- The Mirpur Brigade, with its Headquarters at Janghar, commanded by Brig Chhatar Singh.
- The Poonch Brigade, under Brigadier Krishna Singh, was deployed in the Poonch-Rawalkot sector.
- The Kashmir Brigade comprised of Bodyguard Cavalry and 7

Jammu & Kashmir Rifles at Srinagar, with its other infantry battalions committed in Kohala-Domel area and north of Bunji to Leh. Besides these troops, there were some garrison police companies and animal and mechanical transport elements. Deployed in penny packets over huge area, it presented a great tactical nightmare for its commander.

Ironically, the whole force was dependent for arms and ammunition on the Northern Command Headquarters at Rawalpindi, which was now in Pakistan. To add to its woes, its only wireless link connected it to Rawalpindi and none existed with New Delhi. Needless to say, Maharaja's troops were totally unprepared for the war that was thrust upon them.

The vital link between Kashmir and Pakistan, connecting Muzzafarabad city with district Hazara and Abbotabad, was used by the invaders from NWFP.

The strategically important bridge at Muzaffarabad on Kishenganga River was defended by 4th Battalion of the Jammu and Kashmir Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Narain Singh. Plans had been drawn to blow up this bridge, as and when the situation so demanded. The class composition of this battalion was; two companies each of Dogra Rajputs and Mirpuri Muslims. The Maharaja had not been too comfortable with idea of defending this most crucial link of his state, with the battalion having 50 per cent of its troops comprising Muslims from Mirpur. However, having been assured of their loyalty by the commanding officer, himself, the Maharaja did not consider it advisable to make any changes. Colonel Narain Singh's assessment of these troops was based on World War II where these troops had fought an enemy in a totally different environment in Alexenderia. As it disastrously turned out, his assessment was terribly inaccurate. On getting the signal from across the bridge, the Muslim troops mutinied. The commanding officer

was the first to be shot dead in his tent, thus providing the raiders a free run, thereafter. The town was captured on October 23, 1947. Mahaura fell immediately thereafter. Here, the raiders destroyed the power house, plunging the valley into darkness.

On October 24, 1947, it was the turn of Baramulla, further to the south-east, the first and the only big town on the road to Srinagar, 56 kms away. Its entire population of 14,000 comprised entirely of ethnic Kashmiris, predominantly Muslim. "Dirty, blood-stained, ill-kempt with ragged beards and hair; some carrying a blanket, most completely unequipped," wrote Father George Shanks, a missionary priest in Baramullah, describing the ill-disciplined tribal army as it entered the town. They were armed "with rifles of Frontier make, double-barrelled shotguns, revolvers, daggers, swords, axes and here and there a sten gun. Jostling one another, shouting, cursing and brawling, they came on in a never-ending stream." The tribesmen ransacked the mission, looted Muslim homes and businesses, and abducted Sikh girls and women. The quest for booty delayed their advance towards the Kashmiri capital."[39] The raiders indulged in loot and massacre not heard of in many decades. They created such mayhem that only 3,000 people were left in the town. Baramulla provided a gold mine of goodies to the invaders, bulk of whom, as mentioned earlier, had been roped into the enterprise on such a promise. The operation was halted to let the desperadoes indulge in loot and rape to their heart's content. Many returned to their homes carrying tons of booty loaded on horses, donkeys and whatever means of transport they could lay their hands on.

The aim of the invaders had been to time their campaign in a manner that would enable them to celebrate *Eid* festival at Srinagar. Margaret Parton of the *New York Herald Tribune*, who was on the scene wrote to her mother at that time, "the buses which

were to sweep them into Srinagar on *Eid* day were commandeered instead, by the looting groups and loaded with stolen goods of the poor Kashmiris, and sent off in the opposite direction." According to Robert Trumbull of the *New York Times* these numbered "280 truckload of loot and captive women." This story is corroborated by M Asghar Khan, who wrote in Pakistani daily, *Dawn*, "When the tribesmen reached the valley, they began loot and plunder and after filling their vehicles began to return to the tribal area of North West Frontier leaving the small number of regular Pakistani army officers and men and few tribesmen to mount an attack on Srinagar. Since this attack was delayed for a week, and because of return of large number of tribesmen to their homes, the Indian army got the opportunity to rush troops to Srinagar." In doing so, the invaders wasted precious time, which not only saved Srinagar from similar fate but also ensured that they could not annex Jammu and Kashmir, the very aim of the operation. In the absence of any forces available at that time to defend Srinagar, the raiders could have had a free run to the town. They could have captured the airfield and with that the only hope of rushing a sizeable number of troops to Srinagar at short notice would have ended. As subsequent events would show, the availability of Srinagar airfield for safe landing of Indian troops on October 27, 1947, proved decisive to the outcome of the 1947–48 Indo-Pak war.

Same story of loot, rape, abduction, torture and much worse was repeated on other fronts too. One of the saddest was the sacking of Mirpur by the invading Pathans who torched it on November 26, 1947. "They killed several hundred soldiers and civilians and captured hundreds of women who were taken as war booty. Many of them were sold for ₹ 150 after being paraded naked through the streets of Jhelum by the exultant Pathan tribesmen."[40] The story of this shameful episode is narrated by one of the survivors, Inder Singh Bali, son of Sardar Tehil Singh, State Jagirdar of Mirpur proper:

"...Out of our party, about 300 girls were forcibly taken away and when we reached Thatala camp, we heard from the Hindus that had already reached there, that their 500 girls had also been taken away. At Thatala we found that not less than 2,000 Pathans, all with 303 rifles were present."[41] Such utter disregard for human life and dignity attracted the attention of the Indian leaders at the highest level. Pandit Nehru took up this matter with Pakistan authorities on almost daily basis. Shortly after the fall of Mirpur, he sent the following telegram to Pakistani authorities:

"For Prime Minister Pakistan, from Prime Minister, India".

"...I have also been informed that 3,000 abducted Hindu women have been brought to Gujrat from the Bhimber area and they are being sold like cattle at ₹ 150 each. I am asking an officer on the staff of the Deputy High Commissioner at Lahore to go personally to make enquiries to Gujrat district and I hope you will ask Punjab Government to give him all the facilities."[42]

The very next day, on December 2, 1947, Nehru sent another telegram:-

"For Liaqat Ali Khan from Jawahar Lal Nehru."

"I have received information that Mirpur town has been completely destroyed and out of 13,000 (half of 26,000) non-Muslims, only 2,000 (half of 4,000) have reached within 15 miles of Jhelum. Fate of these refugees, as well as of about 3,000 (half of 6,000) from the rest of Mirpur, is not known. But there are reports that a large number of abducted Hindu women have been brought to Jhelum district by Pathans. The Pathans are causing panic among non-Muslim refugee pockets, are firing indiscriminately..."[43]

This was followed by another telegram the very next day-December 3, 1947:

"I have been drawing your attention to large concentrations of tribesmen and others in West Punjab near the border of Kashmir state and to the abduction of large numbers of women from Kashmir who are being offered for sale in West Punjab..."[44]

Such depredations caused by the invaders are corroborated from several other sources. Given below is an extract from the report sent by a civil Intelligence Officer of the Government of India in Pakistan:

"In Jhelum, no Hindu except our staff is left. The district liaison officer, who has to depend either on the information received from high district officials or from some of his Muslim friends, reports that in Jhelum, girls abducted from Mirpur side are sold in Jhelum city at ₹ 20 each. The local police refuse to interfere on the ground that the girls were not removed from the Punjab, and also they express their helplessness, because of the attitude of the armed Pathans possessing these girls."[45]

While these depredations were going on, the operational situation on the Baramulla-Srinagar axis was turning grave for the Maharaja. On October 25, 1947, when the invaders were nearing Srinagar, Mehar Chand Mahajan, the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir State, flew to Delhi. He tried to persuade a reluctant Nehru to send the army to save the valley from further loot, arson and rape, as meted out to the residents of Baramulla. A graphic account of this meeting is recounted by Sisir Gupta, while quoting Mehar Chand Mahajan, thus, "I met the Prime Minister of India and the Deputy Prime Minister and apprised them of the serious and dangerous situation in the State. I solicited army help and said that the army must be flown in at once; otherwise the whole town of Srinagar and all we hold valuable would be completely destroyed. I was asked how an army could be sent at a moment's notice. I was assured that even if Srinagar fell into Pakistani hands, it would be retaken. I was not impressed and took up a firm attitude and

said, 'Give Army, take accession and give whatever power you want to the popular party. But army must fly to Srinagar this evening; otherwise I will go and negotiate terms with Jinnah, as the city must be saved.' On this, the Prime Minister (Nehru) flew into a rage and gave an exhibition of his temper and told me to get out. Just as I was getting up, an incident happened that saved me and saved Kashmir from falling into Pakistan's hands. Sheikh Abdullah, who was staying in the Prime Minister's house, was overhearing the talks. The Prime Minister (Mehar Chand Mahajan) read it and said, 'what I was saying was also the view of Sheikh Sahib' and his attitude completely changed. I have always felt grateful to Sheikh Abdullah for his help at most crucial time. It was thus that Kashmir was saved from falling into the hands of Pakistan."[46]

However, Nehru continued to dither. Even after the Instrument of Accession was signed and the army waited for Nehru's orders to move into the valley without wasting any more time, he appeared indecisive. Rather than issuing a clear cut directive to the army to move its forces into Kashmir at the earliest, he was heard referring to some perceived reaction of the various countries. This has been graphically recounted by the late Field Marshal SHFJ Manekshaw, who was posted in the Military Operations Directorate at Army Headquarters, at that crucial period in history and had a ringside view of the events. Given below is his account of those momentous events of which he was not only a witness, but a participant too.

He says: "At about 2.30 in the afternoon, General Sir Roy Bucher walked into my room and said, 'Eh, you, go and pick up your toothbrush. You are going to Srinagar with VP Menon. The flight will take off at about 4 o'clock.' I said, 'Why me, Sir? "Because, we are worried about the military situation. VP Menon is going there to get the accession from the Maharaja and Mahajan." I flew in with VP Menon in a Dakota..."

"…Since I was in the Directorate of Military Operations, and was responsible for current operations all over India, West Frontier, the Punjab, and elsewhere, I knew what the situation in Kashmir was. I knew that the tribesmen had come in..."

"...Fortunately for us, and for Kashmir, they were busy raiding, raping all along. In Baramulla they killed Colonel D.O.T. Dykes. Dykes and I were of the same seniority. We did our first year's attachment with the Royal Scots in Lahore, way back in 1934–5. Tom went to the Sikh regiment. I went to the Frontier Force regiment. We'd lost contact with each other. He'd become a lieutenant colonel. I'd become a full colonel... Tom and his wife were holidaying in Baramulla when the tribesmen killed them."

"The Maharaja's forces were 50 per cent Muslim and 50 per cent Dogra. The Muslim elements had revolted and joined the Pakistani forces. This was the broad military situation. The tribesmen were believed to be about seven to nine kilometers from Srinagar. I was sent in to get the precise military situation. The army knew that if we had to send soldiers, we would have to fly them in... But we couldn't fly them in until the state of Kashmir had acceded to India."

"...Anyway, we were flown in. We went to Srinagar. We went to the palace. I have never seen such disorganisation in my life... The Maharaja was coming out of one room, and going into another saying, "Alright, if India doesn't help, I will go and join my troops and fight (it) out ...Eventually, I also got the military situation from everybody and discovered that the tribesmen were about seven or nine kilometres from what was then that horrible little airfield."

"VP Menon was, in the meantime, discussing with Mahajan and the Maharaja. Eventually, the Maharaja signed the accession papers and we flew back in the Dakota late at night. There were no night facilities, and the people who were helping us to fly back, to light the airfield, were Sheikh Abdullah, Kasimsahib, Sadiqsahib, Bakshi

Ghulam Mohammed, and DP Dhar with pine torches, and we flew back to Delhi. I can't remember the exact time. It must have been 3 o'clock or 4 o'clock in the morning."

"(On arriving at Delhi) the first thing I did was to go and report to Sir Roy Bucher. He said, 'Eh, you, go and shave and clean up. There is a cabinet meeting at 9 o'clock. I will pick you up and take you there.' ...Roy Bucher picked me up and we went to the cabinet meeting. The cabinet meeting was presided over by Mountbatten. There was Jawaharlal Nehru, there was Sardar Patel, and there was Sardar Baldev Singh. There were other ministers whom I did not know. Sardar Baldev Singh I knew because he was the Minister for Defence, and I knew Sardar Patel, because Patel would insist that VP Menon take me with him to the various states."

"At the morning meeting, he handed over the (Accession) thing. Mountbatten turned around and said, 'Come on Manekji (He called me Manekji instead of Manekshaw), what is the military situation?' I gave him the military situation, and told him that unless we flew in troops immediately, we would have lost Srinagar, because going by road would take days, and once the tribesmen got to the airport and Srinagar, we couldn't fly troops in..."

"As usual Nehru talked about the United Nations, Russia, Africa, God almighty, everybody, until Sardar Patel lost his temper. He said, 'Jawaharlal, do you want Kashmir, or do you want to give it away.' He (Nehru) said, 'Of course, *I want Kashmir* (emphasis in original). Then he (Patel) said 'Please give your orders.' And before he could say anything, Sardar Patel turned to me and said, 'You have got your orders.'"

"I walked out, and we started flying in troops at about 11 o'clock or 12 o'clock. I think it was the Sikh regiment under Ranjit Rai that was the first lot to be flown in. And then we continued flying troops in. That is all I know about what happened..."[47]

Campbell Johnson recalls... "He (VP Menon) reported that he had found the Maharaja unnerved by the rush of events and the sense of his lone helplessness. Impressed at last with the urgency of the situation, he had felt that unless India could help immediately, all would be lost. Later in the day, on the strong advice of VP, the Maharaja left Srinagar with his wife and son. VP had impressed upon him that as the raiders had reached Baramulla, it would be foolhardy for His Highness to stay on in the capital. The Maharaja also signed a letter of accession which VP was able to present to the Defence Committee."[48] The letter accompanying instrument of accession, inter alia, stated, "...With the conditions obtaining at present in my State and the great emergency of the situation as it exists, I have no option but to ask for help from the Indian dominion. Naturally they cannot send the help asked for by me without my acceding to the dominion of India. I have, accordingly, decided to do so, and I attach the Instrument of Accession for acceptance by your Government..."[49]

The Instrument of Accession, signed by the Maharaja on October 26, 1947, alongwith the letter accompanying it, was discussed in the Defence Committee. On October 27, 1947, Mountbatten wrote back to the Maharaja, accepting the accession, but significantly adding, "... It is my Government's wish that as soon as law and order have been restored in Kashmir and her soil cleared of invaders, the question of the State's accession should be settled by a reference to the people."[50] According to Campbell Johnson, Mountbatten was permitted to include this caveat by the Defence Committee, wherein it had been unilaterally proposed by Nehru and accepted by others.

On November 1, 1947, Lord Mountbatten, during his visit to Lahore to resolve the issue, received an offer from the Governor General of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, which, among other things stated, "The two Governors General to be given full powers to restore peace, undertake the administration of the State and

arrange for plebiscite without delay under their joint control and supervision." Jinnah had clearly overlooked the fact that Mountbatten was answerable to the Union Cabinet in India and did not enjoy the same sweeping powers that Jinnah had in Pakistan. Therefore, Mountbatten rejected the proposal. However, he in turn suggested a plebiscite under United Nations auspices. But Jinnah rejected the proposal insisting that the two Governors General should organise it."[51] On November 2, 1947, Nehru made a radio broadcast in which he repeated the proposal offered by Mountbatten to Jinnah concerning India's willingness to hold plebiscite in the state under the auspices of United Nations.

It is apparent that both, Muntbatten and Nehru, exceeded their brief when they tinkered with the Instrument of Accession by attaching conditionality. In this regard, the observations of the former Chief Justice of India, Justice AS Anand, are quite apt, "The Indian Independence Act did not envisage conditional accession; it could not envisage such a situation as it would be outside the Parliament's policy. It wanted to keep no Indian State in a state of suspense. It conferred on the rulers of the Indian States absolute power in their discretion to accede to either of the two dominions. The dominion's Governor General had the power to accept the accession or reject the offer, but he had no power to keep the question open or attach conditions to it." Justice Anand further adds, "There can be no question of accession having been conditional as the Instrument of Accession and the Indian Independence Act were the only documents relevant to the accession and the constitutional documents did not contemplate any conditions to it. Any moral grounds could not override constitutional and statutory provisions."[52]

It would be pertinent to mention here that some people with vested interests and those not conversant with the intricacies of the accession confuse the very meaning and purpose of Instrument of

Accession and the Instrument of Merger. They argue that the state of Jammu and Kashmir has only acceded to India and not merged with it. The fact is that the British Government divided the 'States Department' into two sections and made these responsible for the two respective Dominions of India and Pakistan. The two state departments were headed by Sardar Patel and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, respectively. Besides other issues, they were required to work out the modalities and finer details of accession, as these concerned their own dominions. These provisions would lay down the terms and conditions on which the accession would take place. Both sections in due course, formulated the Instrument of Accession, which laid down the procedures, terms and conditions, according to which the princely states would accede to either of the dominions. The Instrument of Accession drawn by both dominions left no option for the princely states but to accede to either of them on the terms and conditions formulated as stated heretofore.

The Instrument of Accession prepared by the Indian section of the State Department laid down different sets of terms and conditions: one for the larger states and the other for smaller principalities, jagirs, etc., purely on account of administrative reasons. The procedure envisaged the integration of smaller princely states, principalities, jagirs, etc., into larger and administratively viable states in which these were geographically located, before the latter would be required to sign the Instrument of Accession to the Union of India, to complete the process of accession. The Indian section of the State Department drew up an Instrument of Attachment (erroneously called Instrument of Merger) for smaller states for this purpose. As a result, 275 smaller states were integrated into five unions, namely, Madhya Bharat, Patiala and East Punjab State Union, Rajasthan, Saurashtra and Travancore-Cochin. As is evident, the State of Jammu and Kashmir was not required to sign any Instrument of Attachment/ Instrument of Merger, as the provision did not apply to it.

Irrespective of what Mountbatten wrote or what Nehru said, the signing of the Instrument of Accession now opened the path for the Indian government to render military assistance to the state at the earliest, before the invading forces reached Srinagar.

India Intervenes Militarily

The first batch of Indian troops landed in Srinagar the next day i.e. October 27, 1947. "Before dawn on Monday, 27 October 1947, soldiers from the Indian Army's Sikh Regiment gathered at short notice at Palam airport outside Delhi. Their mission — to spearhead an urgent military airlift intended to secure the Kashmir Valley for India."[53] "I arrived at Palam airport at 0300, an hour before the Sikhs were expected. The aerodrome was floodlit to facilitate loading and we had tea ready for the troops... We were racing against time but fortunately things somehow worked all right. The Dakota planes could take at most 17 soldiers along with personal bedrolls and ammunition. The airfield at the capital, Srinagar, was basic — no fuelling or servicing facilities, no tarmac landing strip, no lighting for night-time flights. The first Indian troops reached there about 9 AM on that morning. By the end of the day, 28 military flights had been completed and 300 Indian servicemen had landed."[54]

Andrew Whitehead adds, "They were the first ever Indian troops in Kashmir, and the following morning — as they sought to check the advance of invading Pakistani tribesmen — Indian soldiers fired their first shots in a conflict which still remains unresolved."[55] Vincent Shean writes, "...The Maharaja's accession to India...and the dispatch of first Indian troops (27 October, 1947)... were the direct inevitable consequences of this invasion..."[56]

From October 22, 1947, till the time Indian troops landed in the valley, the NC leaders utilised its cadres to galvanise the population of the valley into action. As the organisation was entrenched at the

grass-roots level, it became easier for the party to harness enough manpower, which acted as some sort of a civil defence force. Though in military terms its contribution was minimal, its most visible effect was to keep up the morale of the people at large and prevent breakdown of law and order which would have resulted into an uncontrollable chaos.

On the ground, the situation was perilous. Maharaja's inadequate forces were thinly spread out without much planning. To make matters worse, large-scale desertions by Muslim troops from some of his infantry units further aggravated the problem. Lieutenant Colonel Hari Singh, one of his commanding officers was murdered in his sleep. Brigadier Ghansara Singh, who was sent to Gilgit, once the British paramountcy expired on October 30, 1947, met with a similar fate. Muslim officers and men mutinied and with the active connivance of the Garrison Commander, Major Brown, hoisted the Pakistani flag on November 4, 1947. Major Somnath Sharma, commanding a small force of Kumaon Regiment and Lieutenant Colonel Ranjit Rai, commanding 1 SIKH Regiment, got killed at Badgam and Baramulla respectively, in the very first phase of the Indian Army's riposte. The 1947–48 Indo-Pak war was a saga of great sacrifices and exemplary courage — at both unit and individual level — that saved the day for India. Many of these acts can be written in golden letters in the annals of military history. Three of these are:-

- Air Commodore Meher Singh's flight to Leh over uncharted course, flying at a height of 23,000 ft without oxygen and landing at a rough air strip at Leh at a height of 11,555 ft on May 24, 1948.
- Major General KS Thimayya's moving of tanks to Zoji La at a height of 11,578 ft, on November 1, 1948. First time tanks had been taken to such a height.
- Lieutenant Colonel Sher Jung Thapa's staunch leadership at

> Skardu, while refusing to surrender despite the siege laid to his post by numerically superior Pakistani forces, without any hope of receiving any reinforcements. His strong and dogged determination to hold out for six months against overwhelming odds, beating back one assault after another, right till the end, can only be termed as militarily exceptional.

Pakistan initially denied any role in the invasion of the valley and termed it purely as the rebellion by the Muslim subjects of the state against the Hindu Maharaja. This line was also adopted by Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Sir Mohammad Zaffar Ullah Khan even at the UN. However, he later admitted that Pakistan army got involved only after May 1948. These blatant lies were later exposed by what Pakistani generals themselves wrote a few years later. Some of the publications that carried these explicit admissions include, memoirs of General Mohammad Akbar Khan himself entitled *Raiders in Kashmir*[57] and his interview carried in *Defence Journal*.[58] And in General Musa's memoirs, *Jawan to General: Recollections of a Pakistani Soldier*."[59] During the interview given to Brigadier (Retd) AR Siddiqi, General Akbar Khan is quoted thus, "A few weeks after partition, I was asked by Mian Iftikharudin on behalf of Liaqat Ali Khan to prepare a plan for action on Kashmir. I found that the Army was holding 4,000 rifles for the civil police. If these could be given to the locals, an armed uprising in Kashmir could be organised at suitable places. I wrote a plan on this basis and gave it to Mian Iftikharudin. I was called to a meeting with Liaqat Ali Khan at Lahore where the plan was adopted, responsibilities allotted and orders issued. Everything was to be kept a secret from the Army."

Sardar Patel, the Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister of India at that time, flew into Srinagar accompanied by Baldev Singh, the Defence Minister. After assessing the grim situation, he returned to Delhi and ordered the stoppage of all civil aircraft on airline duties

and ordered these aircraft to bolster the strength of Indian Air Force planes to ferry troops to Srinagar. This ensured that the offensive against the raiders got a boost despite earlier setbacks. As a result, the tide started turning slowly, but surely. By December 1947, Pakistanis had been thrown back and evacuated from most parts of the valley and from Poonch and Rajouri districts of Jammu. As Indian troops continued their advance, Pakistan army directly assumed the control of the operations, committing its regular troops as part of normal formations. With the onset of winter in November 1947, progress of the operations became difficult and laborious. Nevertheless, forward movement was maintained on all fronts.

However, inexplicably and much against the existing military situation on the battlefront, Nehru allowed his idealism to get the better of his sense of pragmatism. He decided to refer the case to the UN. Nehru rejected Army's advice to let them take their counter offensive to its logical conclusion. He paid more heed to the advice offered by the Governor General, Lord Mountbatten, than to the one offered by his own Deputy Prime Minister, Sardar Patel. In fact the latter's disagreement with Nehru on this issue was so strong that Sardar Patel sent in his resignation from the Council of Ministers to Nehru on December 22, 1947. However, under Gandhi's pressure, he later withdrew it.

On January 1, 1948, India took the case to UN, where it continued to be discussed for bulk of the next year.

Proceedings at the UN

The UN passed four resolutions; the most significant of which was the three-part resolution of August 13, 1948, which stated:

- **Part I:** This related to the cessation of hostilities by implementing the ceasefire orders. Both India and Pakistan were required to issue ceasefire orders within four days of

the acceptance of the resolution. The Commission to be set up to mediate between the two countries, agreed upon by both countries vide resolution passed on April 17, 1948, would appoint military observers to monitor the ceasefire.

- **Part II:** This consisted of a number of sub-parts. These were:
  (a) Pakistan would withdraw its troops from the State of Jammu and Kashmir.
  (b) Tribesmen and Pakistani nationals too would withdraw.
  (c) Territory evacuated by Pakistani troops would be administered by local authorities under the surveillance of the Commission.
  (d) India would begin withdrawing bulk of its troops from the State once the Commission had notified it that the tribesmen and Pakistani nationals had withdrawn and Pakistani troops were beginning to withdraw.
  (e) India would maintain minimum force required for the assistance of the local authorities for maintaining law and order, within the lines existing at the time of coming into effect of the ceasefire.
- **Part III:** This stated that "The Government of India and Pakistan reaffirm their wish that the future status of Jammu and Kashmir shall be determined in accordance with the will of the people. To that end, upon the acceptance of the said agreement, both countries agree to enter into consultation with the Commission to determine fair and equitable conditions, whereby such free expression of the will be assured."

One of the important assurances given by the "UN Commission

for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) was that "the plebiscite proposal shall not be binding upon India, if Pakistan does not implement Part I or Part II of the Resolution of August, 1948."

Militarily, as the winter of 1947 set in, the raiders had been cleared off the valley and were now entrenched on the high mountains. By spring, when the Indian army's renewed offensive began, the Pakistan army had dropped its pretensions of innocence and the war now embroiled the two newly independent countries. By the summer of 1948, the Indian army's offensive, though slow, was inexorably inching towards Pakistan's borders. UN was, in the meantime, pressing both countries to stop fighting as a first step towards formalising the methodology for holding a plebiscite. Pakistan had been all along rejecting the proposal as it wanted the plebiscite modalities to be worked out first before it could accept the ceasefire. The UNCIP, was, however, convinced that accepting Pakistani condition would amount to putting the cart before the horse. It was keen to break the logjam. Indian spring offensive, in which it gained some significant victories, provided this window of opportunity to convince Pakistan to accept the ceasefire. Reflecting on this important opportunity, which the situation on ground provided, Joseph Korbel writes, "Certainly, now that Indian army was on the offensive, advancing closer and closer to her border, Pakistan might find it very much in her interest to stop fighting, particularly, if by the establishment of a Ceasefire Line (CFL), this advance would be terminated.

Nehru did not appear at this stage to be well-disposed to the idea of ceasefire. When Joseph Korbel broached this subject with him, Nehru reminded the former that he could not put the owner and intruder on the same platform and demanded that Pakistan be first condemned as an aggressor and concluded by a terse comment, "You treat the thief and the owner of the house as equals. First the thief must get out, and then we can discuss steps further."[60]

Documents declassified lately throw enough light on how Nehru was manipulated into offering a ceasefire on December 30, 1948, much against the logic of military situation on ground and the likely impact the ceasefire would have on the future of India. It did not strike Nehru that the ceasefire would leave Pakistan in occupation of nearly one-third of the state's territory, giving rise to an irresolvable dispute and a permanent source of tension between the two states. As is mentioned elsewhere, Indian and Pakistani Army Chiefs were both serving British Army officers, who in turn were commanded by one overall Commander-in-Chief, Field Marshal Claude Auchinleek, who again was a British officer. Manipulating the end result, as it suited the British strategic interests of that period, was not all that difficult. As Colonel SK Bose writes, "...the whole thing was a put up job, stage-managed by British and Nehru was neatly manipulated..."[61] That the offer of ceasefire should have been made by India soon after securing of Zoji La makes it even more intriguing.

Earlier, Pakistani forces had captured a vast territory in Ladakh-Gilgit-Baltistan region by bold and innovative tactical manoeuvre." ...In a brilliant manoeuvre, a young Pakistani Lieutenant Colonel Aslam Khan, had by-passed Skardu and captured Zoji La, Dras and Kargil simultaneously on May 10, 1948. The besieged garrison of Skardu under Lieutenant Colonel Sher Jung Thapa, MVC, was completely isolated. However, it held on for another three months and surrendered on August 14, 1948, after holding out for six months and three days."[62] As it was of utmost importance that this vital pass is recaptured at the earliest, the battle for securing it started as soon as the snows melted in the region. By November 1948, the pass was in Indian hands.

Ceasefire, however, was offered a month later when Nehru was jolted by the reverses suffered in Janghar. How did Janghar happen? In December 1948, after spending many months quietly in Jammu, General Kalwant Singh, much against his will, was

ordered by the Army Headquarters to move towards Poonch. The key to this advance was a road junction at Jhangar, otherwise of little consequence. According to Lieutenant General James Wilson, "The Indian advance had made it a traffic shamble with far too many lorries and establishment crammed into a confined space. It was an obvious artillery target and being just inside the Kashmir border, could be engaged from gun positions from Pakistan territory."[63] Pakistan fully exploited the tactical opportunity that presented itself. About 200 medium and field guns which had been quietly assembled, targets registered and ammunition placed in position, opened up suddenly on the hapless convoy at Jhangar, which proved to be a sitting duck. This had a devastating effect, with immediate consequences. General Wilson writes, "...That very afternoon, the British Commander-in-Chief in Delhi, came on the telephone. He told us that he had the Indian Government's approval to suggest an immediate ceasefire in Kashmir on existing positions: he proposed a meeting on January 1, 1949 between the two C's-in-C and their staffs to record these arrangements and convert the truce into a formal ceasefire, pending outcome of the negotiations for the future of Kashmir through the United Nations Commission."[64]

Since May 1948, Pakistan was now officially at war with India, as it had acknowledged the deployment of its army formations in active combat. It could no longer take refuge under the excuse that the raiders were an autonomous entity, who would refuse to listen to their orders. It was now entirely upto it to accept or reject the offer of ceasefire.

It is apparent from the above episode that firstly, whereas Pakistan seemed aware of the movement of Indian troops to Poonch and pile up of the transport at Jhangar, India was totally unaware of the assembly of about 200 Pakistani artillery guns and its ammunition,

just across the frontline. Secondly, move to Poonch appears to have been the result of a sudden brainwave at Army Headquarters, which even caught General Kalwant Singh unawares. Thirdly, General Roy Bucher said on the phone that he had the approval of the Indian Government for the proposed ceasefire. This clearly establishes that the initiative for offering ceasefire came from him and he had not been directed by the Government of India to offer a ceasefire. Fourthly, the ceasefire came into effect on General Roy Bucher's last day in the office, as on the very next day, he was handing over the charge to the first Indian Commander in Chief, General KM Carriappa.

Air Marshal KC Carriappa (Retd), son of Field Marshal KM Carriappa, writes, "Father was GOC-in-C Western Command and Major General Thimayya was the operational commander in Jammu and Kashmir. They were convinced that capture of Muzzafarabad, now the capital of PoK, was imminent. The Army, however, was ordered to suspend all operations with effect from January 1, 1949, even though the enemy continued fighting. Field Marshal Carriappa had later said that Army had its tail up and was 'confident of clearing most of Kashmir and re-investing Gilgit.' But orders were received to ceasefire. The Field Marshal further said, 'The Army was very disappointed by this decision, but orders were orders.'"[65] As Air Marshal Carriappa writes, "a few years later, the Field Marshal asked Nehru for the reasons for enforcing ceasefire. Nehru replied, 'Quite frankly, looking back on it now, I think we should have given you few more days, ten or fifteen days more. Things would have been different.'" This assertion is further confirmed by Lieutenant General SK Sinha (Retd), till recently the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir and the man who had been involved with the military planning of this operation from the first day. In an interview to weekly magazine, *Week*, (August 24, 2008), he said, "...Thrice we were in a position to capture Muzzafarabad, but each time Nehru ordered us to withdraw..."

What is even more intriguing is the fact that India did not ask the

UN to deal with the issue of Pakistan's aggression under chapter VII of the UN Charter, which specifically deals with 'Acts of Agression', but under chapter VI, which deals with 'Pacific Settlement of Disputes. It was either a serious error of judgement, or a deliberate ploy to let Pakistan off the hook. Irrespective of the cause of this *faux pas,* it clearly pointed to the lack of awareness of India's core concerns.

It can be surmised from the above that the Jhangar debacle was manipulated by General Roy Bucher to offset the gains made by the capture of Zoji La by Indian troops and present an alarming situation to Nehru, so that a ceasefire proposal could be extracted from him, before Roy Bucher relinquished his office. This diabolical deviousness of the British is not surprising when we look at the involvement of their officers in the treachery perpetrated by them in the fall of Skardu and Gilgit. As is well-known, at critical stages General Roy Bucher controlled the Kashmir operation in a manner that suited the British; he ensured that Pakistani army was not driven out completely from Kashmir. Undoubtedly, Nehru was no match to the clever and devious manipulations of the British who had mastered this art while ensuring that sun never set on their empire.

Major General Hira Lal Atal writes, "...It was under the command of Major General KS Thimayya, who succeeded Major General Kalwant Singh, that the position in the conflict was stabilised and the Indian army got the upper hand and enemy was pressed hard on all fronts. It was only a matter of time when we would have pushed the Pakistan Army out of our territory."[66] General Atal further adds, "While the situation in Kashmir was under control and to our advantage, we heard on the radio in the morning of December 31, that a ceasefire had been agreed to by both countries..."[67] Atal goes so far as to say, that leave alone the military leadership, Nehru did not even consult Sheikh Abdullah, on whose intervention Nehru had agreed to send the

army to Kashmir, in the first place. He writes, "This (ceasefire) was evidently agreed to by our Prime Minister without even consulting operational commanders in the field or Sheikh Abdullah, who was very much an interested party. This was a staggering blow to all of them."[68] Writing about Sheikh Abdullah's reaction to his being not consulted by Nehru on an issue as important as this, General Atal continues, "Within a couple of days thereafter, Sheikh Abdullah blew into my house at Akbar Road, at breakfast time, and was fuming at the monstrosity of ceasefire that had been committed without even consulting him as he put it and... He was terribly agitated and annoyed."[69]

Even sixty years after the event, not a single piece of evidence has surfaced which could indicate that Nehru either sought or obtained any military advice before rushing to the UN. Even worse, no senior army general or any of the operational commanders were consulted by Nehru before accepting ceasefire. Military leadership at that time, though professionally outstanding, was moulded in the true British tradition, wherein it was the political leadership that took such decisions, irrespective of whether military advice was sought or not. Almost all senior military commanders are unanimous that calling a halt to military operations was a folly.

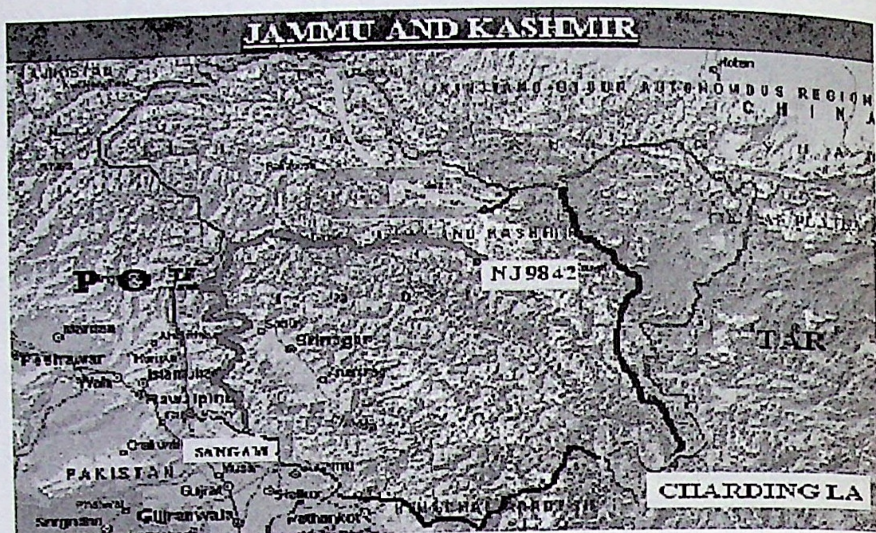
The CFL (Later, LoC)

The Ceasefire Resolution, which came into effect on January 1, 1949, was formalised by the Karachi Agreement that delineated the CFL. In due course of time, it became the LoC. Ceasefire ensured that complete districts of Mirpur and Poonch *jagir* of Jammu region, complete district of Muzzafarabad and part of Baramulla district in the valley, and the entire district of Baltistan, Gilgit, Gilgit agency and its Dardic agencies, remained under Pakistan's occupation. In the meanwhile, Hari Singh transferred the state power to NC on October 29, 1947.

The Indo-Pak border is approximately 2500 kms long, stretching from Karakòram in the north to Rann of Kutch in the south. The area south of Chenab is demarcated as the International Border. However, area north of it till grid point NJ 9842, short of Siachen Glacier, measuring roughly 776 kms, is delineated as the LoC. The Karachi Agreement became the first agreement to amicably resolve various disputes and arrive at mutually agreed CFL. It was signed by both sides in July 1949, on the behest of UNCIP. The Indian side was represented by Lieutenant General Srinagesh, Major General KS Thimayya and Brigadier SHFJ Manekshaw. The Pakistan delegation was composed of Major General WJ Cathorn and Nazir Ahmed. After ten days of hard bargaining, the agreement was signed on July 27, 1949. The CFL was delineated based on the general line occupied by respective countries on January 1, 1949. The essential features of the agreement were:-

1. Troops on both sides were to remain at least 500 yards on either side of the CFL.
2. Both sides were free to adjust their defences behind the CFL, subject to no laying of wire/mines.
3. No additional military potential would be introduced into J&K by either side.
4. UNCIP would station observers where deemed necessary.

The CFL remained operative in terms of Karachi Agreement till Pakistan violated it on August 5, 1965, by launching 'Operation Gibraltar,' which led to Indo-Pak war and consequently the signing of the Tashkent Agreement. This restored the Karachi Agreement by stipulating that the status quo ante of August 5, 1965 will prevail. Pakistan vacated some areas in Chhamb-Jaurian and India returned a very strategic Haji Pir pass; a most valuable piece of ground-jutting into the Uri-Poonch bulge.



Map of Jammu and Kashmir depicting CFL/LoC

The last link in the genesis of the present day LoC is the Simla Agreement of July 2, 1972. The essential issues pertaining to the LoC in this agreement were:

- The LoC resulting from the ceasefire of December 17, 1971 shall be respected by both sides.
- Neither side shall alter the LoC unilaterally or by force.
- All differences will be resolved by bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means, mutually agreed upon.

UN Resolutions Serve British Interests

The decisions taken by the UN served the British interests eminently. As Pakistan's officer corps was dangerously depleted, British officers in Pakistan army came to play a decisive role as the war got prolonged. In the process, they implemented an agenda that suited their parent country. They ensured that Indian troops did not proceed beyond where they intended the CFL to be. This line was

so thoughtfully decided that it seemed to serve everyone's immediate purpose. They then went on to manipulate the halting of forces on this CFL, which in due course, would become a de facto border.

Sheikh Abdullah and Nehru looked at the CFL from their individual perspective; mostly as it suited their political goals. Sheikh Abdullah appeared satisfied with the CFL, as that part of Jammu and Kashmir, which remained under Pakistan's occupation bore no or very little resemblance to the valley; ethnically, linguistically and culturally. His political support base was entirely on Indian side of the CFL. This, he thought, would be seriously eroded if the whole state were to remain a single entity. Sheikh's political thinking is clearly borne out by the manner in which the Kotli town, situated on the banks of River Poonch, was inexplicably vacated by Indian army, despite succeeding in lifting its siege and entering the town on November 24, 1947. This withdrawal greatly disappointed the locals, who had held out till then, after making numerous sacrifices. Vishwamitter states in his article, *How Kotli was left for PoK*, "Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who had become the Prime Minister of the State, never wanted the Pahari and Punjabi speaking Muslims to be the residents of his territory."

One of Sheikh Abdullah's old associates, Krishen Dev Sethi, has mentioned in his biography that late SM Abdullah was never a sympathiser of Jammu Muslims and that is why he had intrigued with Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and sent prominent Muslim leaders of Jammu, like Allah Rabba Sagar and Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas, etc., to Pakistan, because he considered them to be his main rivals in Jammu region." Sheikh Abdullah's willingness to accept the division of Kashmir as the best available option to ostensibly, prevent future conflict between India and Pakistan, was actually meant to help him consolidate his political hold in Kashmir. This is confirmed by Joseph Korbel, to whom the Sheikh made this statement during a reception given to the UNCIP in Kashmir. Joseph Korbel quotes Sheikh Abdullah to have told him,

"There is, in my opinion, only one solution open; that is the division of the country. If it is not achieved, the fighting will continue; India and Pakistan will prolong the quarrel indefinitely and our people's sufferings will go on."[70]

Nehru too did not seem to be averse to a divided Kashmir, with its two parts under two dominions. This seems to be confirmed by Joseph Korbel, who, while writing about Nehru's attitude towards the idea of Kashmir's division, says, "...And (Nehru) expressed the thought that he would not be opposed to the idea of dividing the country between India and Pakistan. To one delegate he displayed a map on which the Indian border stretched far west towards Pakistan, including the crucial Valley of Kashmir and even part of west Jammu."[71]

Historically, Britain had always been apprehensive of the Russian desire to extend its influence southwards and in Central Asia. These apprehensions did not lessen later, after the success of Bolshvik Revolution, as Soviet Union continued with the same policy. With China too heading for a communist revolution, Britain felt that the two communist nations would form a formidable alliance and pose a serious threat to its interests in West and South Asia.

Olaf Caroe, the last foreign secretary for the British Raj in India (1939–45), became apprehensive about the safety of the oil resources of West Asia, which he termed as the "Wells of Power". For this and other reasons, he facilitated and then welcomed the partition of India. Jinnah-led Pakistan, the British felt, would be a more suitable shield to protect these wells and its interests in this part of the world. Nehru was all along aware of the British interest in creating Pakistan. He once told UNCIP Chief, Joseph Korbel, "Pakistan is a mediaeval State with an impossible theocratic concept. It should never have been created, and it would never have happened, had the British not stood behind this foolish idea of Jinnah."[72]

Despite this awareness about British manipulations, Nehru and other Congress leaders did not assess correctly the geo-political implications that the creation of a theocratic Muslim state in the north-west of India would have for the country. For centuries, this area had served as an ingress route of the invaders into the Indian heartland. As Dr MK Teng mentions," The Congress leaders, were perhaps, oblivious of the elemental change the creation of Pakistan would bring into the civilisational boundaries of India and the far-reaching effect the establishment of a Muslim power in India, would have on its northern frontiers. Jammu and Kashmir formed the central spur of the great Himalayan uplands. Poised as the State was, it stood as a sentinel for an eastward expansion of any power from the west as well as the north. That the security of Jammu and Kashmir State was crucial to the security of the Himalayas was ignored by the Indian leadership. Pakistan was, however, keenly conscious of the strategic importance of Jammu and Kashmir."[73]

To them (the British), the State of Jammu and Kashmir, geographically located in between the southern fringes of two communist giants, had enormous geo-strategic significance. Even though greatly weakened by the enormous effort needed to win the war (World War II), they held enough aces to ensure that their direct/indirect influence in this region did not end completely and permanently, even when they were winding up their Raj. Britain, therefore, encouraged talk of independence of Jammu and Kashmir whenever opportunity arose. The US followed its closest ally, Britain, in toeing the same line. According to their perception, independent Kashmir was easy to pull into the orbit of their geo-strategic influence. As a result, the UN proceedings were hijacked, to a large extent, by Noel Baker, Britain's pro-Pakistan representative, during Clement Attlee's regime. His devious machinations, which he put into practice tirelessly, succeeded in undermining the Indian stand. He succeeded in getting Resolution 39 passed by the United Nations Security

Council (UNSC) on January, 20, 1948. This envisaged setting up of three-member UNCIP. The Commission was tasked to visit both India and Pakistan and report back on the situation existing on ground. Subsequently, through Resolution 47, the number of members of UNCIP was increased to five. This too was manipulated by Noel Baker, who seized upon the opportunity to have the Chinese draft amended. He felt that a five-member team would present a report more in tune with his own perspective. On the British attitude towards India and that of Noel Baker in particular, Sardar Patel candidly told Aurthur Henderson, the British Under Secretary of State, "Unfortunately, it is my experience that the attitude of an average Englishman in India is instinctively against us... not only has the dispute been prolonged, but the merits of our case have been completely lost in the interaction of power politics... It was, we maintain, the attitude of Noel Baker that tilted the balance against us."[74]

The Commission visited India and Pakistan in July 1948. By the middle of 1948, the ground situation had undergone a radically significant change, as Pakistan had deployed its regular troops in the occupied areas since May 1948. This was admitted by Pakistan Prime Minister to the UNCIP. The UNCIP findings, its reports and its subsequent Resolutions (of August 13, 1949 and January 5, 1948), recognised that the entry of Pakistani army in Jammu and Kashmir was a violation of UNSC Resolution 38, and demanded that Pakistan withdraw its forces from the state, since their presence constituted a "material change in the situation." It further conceded primacy to the ceasefire based on withdrawal of the invaders. Pakistan violated the resolutions blatantly. For example, Pakistan had agreed to withdraw its troops, armed personnel, tribesmen and its citizens from Gilgit-Baltistan within seven weeks. Later, it requested the UN to allow it 12 weeks to do so, but still failed to do so. In fact, Pakistan refused to demilitarise any of the occupied territories, as envisaged

in the UN Resolution. On the other hand, it retained 30,000 strong militia which had entirely been raised from Muslim deserters of the Maharaja's army, ex servicemen of Mirpur, Poonch and Sudhunti, who had been demobilised from the British Indian army after the end of World War II. The militia also included those who had been recruited by the Pakistan army prior to the invasion of the state.

The UNCIP spelt out the terms of the truce on April 28, 1949, stating, "Pending the final solution, the territory evacuated by Pakistani troops will be administered by local authority under the surveillance of the UNCIP. The commission and/or the plebiscite administrator may request the government of India to post a garrison at specified points." However, Pakistan, the occupying authority, turned local authority on the same day by installing a puppet president in PoK (a minion of the MC), and got him to sign an agreement that gave Pakistan the right to administer Gilgit-Baltistan. With armed forces of both countries stationed in the state, the first task of the UN should have been the demilitarisation of the state, rather than plebiscite, as the former was a prerequisite for achieving the latter. This aspect was, however, completely lost sight of.

That was not the only flawed aspect of the UN Resolutions. With bulk of the people illiterate, villages spread out over enormous distances in vast and rugged terrain, "the mere technicality of carrying out plebiscite seemed beyond the scope of reality."[75] In any case, the futility of the plebiscite, wherever such exercise had been held, was well-established. Plebiscites conducted in Europe had only served as instruments of Hitler and Communism to carry out massive propaganda through falsification and exerting pressure.

The UN Resolutions were more a reflection of the emerging geo-strategic interests of those who dominated the UN, rather than an impartial verdict announced by a non-partisan judge. The resolutions failed to indict the aggressor and legitimised the aggression. N

Gopalaswamy Iyenger[76] reminded the Security Council during the debate, that while they had condemned Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria for giving assistance to the rebels fighting the government forces in Greece, they had failed to do so when Pakistanis were fighting a lawfully constituted government in Kashmir. Dr Shyama Prasad Mukerjee,. the founding President of Bhartiya Jana Sangh, too referred to the injustice done to India, when he stated in the Parliament during a debate on August 7, 1952, "...But it is a matter of common knowledge that we have not got fair treatment from UN which we had expected. We did not go to the UNO with regard to the question of accession, because accession then was an established fact. We went there for the purpose of getting quick decision from the UNO regarding the raids which were then taking place by persons behind whom there was Pakistan Government…"[77]

The UNSC did not condemn Pakistan as an aggressor; and it avoided touching upon the legality of the State's accession to India. The commission appointed by it for the state, too did not have any juridical powers, but was only a mediatory agency that could not impose its will. As Joseph Korbel writes, "Its approach was timid. Its evaluation of the situation in Kashmir was far from realistic."[78] Further, a glaring example of the double standards adopted by the UN while dealing with Pakistani invasion of Kashmir, is mentioned here. While Kashmir was still a current subject under discussion in UN, Korean war broke out in June 1950. The UN reacted differently, condemning North Korea for similar transgression as Pakistan had done in Kashmir, but failed to condemn Pakistan.

On March 12, 1949, Admiral Nimitz was designated as Plebiscite Administrator, and United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) was deputed to enforce ceasefire and supervise it. On March 14, 1950, Sir Owen Dixon was appointed representative of the Commission. From 1951 through 1958, five representatives appointed by UN (three of those were US citizens)

discussed the modalities of demilitarisation; the first pre-requisite that would lead to holding of plebiscite. They, however, could not reach an agreement on this crucial issue. It was apparent from their reports submitted to the UNSC that, in their view, holding of plebiscite would create more problems than solving any. Since 1958, no UN representative has been appointed, thus conveying in unmistakable terms the futility of the UN Resolutions. Though UN Resolutions helped bring the war to an end, these also created a festering sore that refuses to heal. In the meantime, in 1953, having been dissatisfied with the policy of UN, both India and Pakistan decided to by-pass UN and try to resolve the issue bi-laterally.

Despite Pakistan itself having violated the Karachi Agreement, and later having signed the Simla Agreement, it continued to harp on the Karachi Agreement as the basis for supporting the existence of UNMOGIP and its right to internationalise the Kashmir dispute. On the other hand, India has been categorical in its assertion that Karachi Agreement was operative in relation to CFL, whereas Simla Agreement refers to the delineation of LoC, which was formalised by the exchange of fresh set of maps in 1972. India further points out that Simla Agreement[79] commits both parties to resolving the dispute bilaterally and UNMOGIP has become irrelevant as India no longer recognises it.

Britain's Reasons for Manipulating UN Debate

Britain had been conscious of the implications of the desire of Czarist Russia to expand southwards, towards Afghanistan; this would have posed a direct threat to its Indian empire. Historical evidence suggests that Czarist Russia had eyed India's riches for long. Czars Paul and Elexander I, had an additional objective, i.e., to weaken Great Britain. Paul at one stage invited France to join him in this enterprise, which would weaken their common enemy. He wrote, "...The French Republic and the Emperor of Russia must

send a combined force of 70,000 men to the borders of India... to liberate India from the barbarous and tyrannical yoke of the English."[80] However, this could not be accomplished, as Napolean's disastrous campaign in Russia put paid to any such move. Therefore, to safeguard its interests, Britain fought two Afghan Wars (1839–1842 and 1879–1881) to pacify the unruly Afghan tribes. But more importantly, its aim was to occupy strategically dominant geographical features in the rugged terrain, which would give its troops the much required tactical advantage, if ever the Russians tried to enter Afghanistan.

In the second half of nineteenth century, Czars had helped a number of warlords in Sinkiang in their internecine wars to gain influence over the region, on which China exercised a loose control. By 1891, Russia had gradually brought this region under their control. Czarist Russia also enjoyed a great advantage in carrying out trade with the region, as the Chinese government had no effective control over Sinkiang. In addition, mainland China's access to it existed only through Russian territory. This restricted accessibility had rendered Sinkiang increasingly dependent on Russia, economically. Indeed, Russian desire and its attempts to reach the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea on the one hand and expand towards Chinese Turkestan on the other, brought it in direct confrontation with the British Empire.

With Czarist troops on the Pamirs, Britain realised the strategic importance of Jammu and Kashmir, ideally placed, as it was, like a wedge in Central Asia. In fact, Britain was so alarmed at the reported correspondence between Maharaja Pratap Singh and Russia (later proved to be a forgery) that it divested the Maharaja of all his powers and constituted a council to rule the princely state. By the beginning of thetwentieth century, the state of mistrust between Russia and Britain had somewhat eased as both were now facing a common threat from Germany. Consequently, in 1905, the Maharaja's rule was restored with full powers that he enjoyed before.

After the successful Bolshvik Revolution in the Soviet Union, the communist threat loomed even larger over the British possessions in South Asia. Now that Germany had been subdued in the World War I, the old threats resurfaced, though in a different garb. In 1919, Britain fought another war to help Afghan rulers to consolidate their power. This enabled the British to create a solid buffer between India and the Soviet Union. In the meantime, the Communist take over of China, which appeared a distinct possibility at that time, confirmed these apprehensions when Nikolai Bhukharin said, "...Victorious Chinese revolution will find an immediate echo in the neighbouring colonial countries — India, Indonesia and Dutch India. All this makes China mighty and of attraction for the colonial periphery."[81]

The Soviet Union took advantage of the Czarist presence and actually sent its troops into the region in 1933. Subsequently, the Soviet Union consolidated its influence in the area to such an extent that their consular representatives continued to function there, despite the fact that the diplomatic relations between China and Soviet Union remained cut off between 1927 and 1932. After the Communists seized power in China, the Soviet activity in Sinkiang got a boost. A large number of Soviet engineers, economists, military and technical personnel now came to be stationed there, primarily with the aim of exploiting the rich mineral resources of Sinkiang. The *Great Game* (n. 17, p. 113) that was being played in Sinkiang (Xinjiang) through Central Asia, created apprehensions in the minds of the western powers about the real intensions of the Soviet Union, their new rival in the 'balance of power'. Later, these developments led to the construction of railway line across Sinkiang, connecting Soviet Turkestan with China.

In 1952, China moved about a million Han Chinese from mainland China and settled them in Sinkiang. In autumn next year, China refused to grant recognition to Indian and Pakistani consulates on the specious plea that Sinkiang was a closed territory. By the beginning of the

fifties, extensive rail and road network connected some industrial areas in Russia with Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, on the borders of Sinkiang. The events taking place at the international level between 1945 and 1955 only confirmed such threat. To counter this threat to its empire from the north, Britain made attempts to make its presence felt in the autonomous Sinkiang, by developing trade and commercial ties with the region. Besides, it took Gilgit on lease from the Maharaja in 1935 and stationed its troops there on permanent basis. This military post was meant to serve as eyes and ears of the British in the region.

In 1930, Indian communists in their Draft Programme of Action asked for the violent overthrow of the Indian government. However, in 1931, on orders from Moscow, Indian communists started joining Indian National Congress in droves. By 1942, they occupied 50 leading party positions. The fear of communism establishing its hold over Kashmir through sombre, behind the scenes Soviet activities in the north and east of the States' frontiers had always induced fear and caution among the British policy-makers. Nehru's left-leaning posture had also convinced the west that eventually he would end up as Soviet ally after the decolonisation of India. This is apparent from Winston Churchill's missive to Nehru on February 11, 1955. It said, "I hope you will think of the phrase, 'The light of Asia'. It seems to me that you may be able to do what no other human being could, in giving India the lead, at least in the realm of thought, throughout Asia, with the freedom and dignity of the individual, as the ideal, rather than communist party drill book."

Utterances of some of the NC leaders in Kashmir and the fact that known communists formed part of Sheikh Abdullah's cabinet, further confirmed British apprehensions. Prominent among the communist sympathisers was Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq (held the posts of President of Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly, Minister of Development, Education, and Prime Minister of the

State, at various stages of his political career). He once declared, "The Anglo-American block does not want peace in the world and it wants to control all the strategic places of the world and Kashmir is one of them."[82] DP Dhar (Deputy Home Minister) and Girdari Lal Dogra (Finance Minister) were the other two left-leaning figures in the NC. The Land Reform Act, under which the communist style radical land reforms were carried out by the newly formed NC government, was formulated under the guidance of Mirza Afzal Beg, the Revenue Minister, who was closely advised on the issue by Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq. Beg once said, "In so far as the State of Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, we have decided to own that system which gives no quarter to production for private profit... Building of socialistic order is our objective and capitalist system is the biggest barrier to human progress."[83]

Other prominent communists holding influential positions in the state were; Niranjan Nath Raina (owner of the New Kashmir Book Shop, that published a popular weekly magazine *Azad*); BPL Bedi (widely believed to have authored the famous *Naya Kashmir* programme); his European wife, Fredda (member of the committee that prepared school text books), and General Secretary of the NC, Maulana Syed Masoodi, who once declared, though not without some justification,"In regard to the Kashmir issue, the imperialist powers like America and Britain had made out Pakistan as an innocent party. This was being done to further their own ends with a view to establish bases here for coming war."[84]

At this stage (while the matter was being discussed in the UNSC), it seems that US was following a strictly correct and legal interpretation of the Instrument of Accession, without taking into consideration the British concerns or their counsel. This is evident from what the US representative, Warren Austin, said in the Security Council on February, 4, 1948, "The external sovereignty of Kashmir is no longer under the control of the Maharaja... With the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India, this foreign sovereignty went over

to India and is exercised by India and that is why India happens to be here (at the UNSC) as a petitioner…" However, Britain continued with its efforts to get US to toe its line on Kashmir.

Britain's stand on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir was also influenced by their predicament in West Asia. The Arabs and their supporters were openly accusing Britain of having failed to stem the flow of Jews to Palestine, which was in violation of the Palestine Mandate. Britain was also accused for having been unable or unwilling to prevent the outbreak of 'Civil War' between Israelis and Palestinians. "Britain took the Palestine issue to UN in April 1947 and announced its decision to abandon its mandate by May 1948. The UN General Assembly immediately adopted a resolution for dividing Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, paving the way for Israel's rebirth as the homeland for Jews in Palestine and the diaspora. The Arab reaction was vicious, instantaneous and directed in bulk against Britain."[85]

To reduce the Arab anger, Britain's foreign office asserted that Britain would have to adopt a pro-Pakistan policy on Kashmir, being a Muslim state. This is evident from the foreign office minute prepared for Clement Attlee, the Prime Minister, "The Foreign Secretary has expressed anxiety lest we should appear to be siding with India in the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, which is now before the UNSC. With the situation as critical as it is in Palestine, Mr Bevin feels that we must be very careful to guard against the danger of aligning the whole of Islam against us, which might be the case were Pakistan to obtain the false impression of our attitude in Security Council." Britain, thus, tried to short change India to appease Muslim sentiment.

Philip Noel Baker, who was not particularly well-disposed towards India, got convinced by Bevin's perspective and wasted no time in working on the US and other non-permanent Security Council

members to bring them around to his point of view in order to toe a pro-Pakistan line in the UNSC. Initially, he did not succeed in convincing the US representative of his stand, but gradually he succeeded in doing so, largely as a result of the fast changing international geo-political situation. With the cold war having set in, America now wanted to maintain 'balance of power' in the post-War world.

With Pakistan already identified as an ally against Soviet expansionism in south Asia, the U.S. decided to toe the British line on Kashmir. "The US State Department's Pakistan desk officer in 1949, excoriated India's 'inflexible attitude with regard to Jammu and Kashmir', suggesting, 'National traits which in time, if not controlled, could make India Japan's successor in Asiatic imperialism. In such circumstances, a strong Muslim block under the leadership of Pakistan, friendly to US, might afford a desirable balance of power in South Asia.'"[86] Subsequent induction of Pakistan into the Baghdad Pact/ CENTO and SEATO can be explained as a direct result of this perception. Hal Gould, a South Asian scholar at the University of Virginia, recently wrote, "America's strategy was its decision to nourish the Megalomaniacal fantasies of Pakistan's anti-democratic elites by sucking the country into its militarised cold war grand strategy. Each infusion of anti-communist armaments reinforced the power of Pakistan's authoritarian ruling classes, fed their anti-Indian inferiority complex and resulted in wars and a perpetual pattern of military provocations, state-sponsored cross-border terrorism and the development of nuclear weapons."[87]

Pakistan exploited to the hilt the American phobia of Communism, which the latter were convinced would engulf South Asia in its fold sooner than later. Hussein Haqqani confirms this in his much acclaimed book, *Pakistan; Between Mosque and Military*, wherein he states, "In one of its first overtly political initiatives, Pakistan's intelligence community fabricated evidence of a Communist threat to Pakistan to get US attention."[88]

To further ingratiate itself with the US and receive their continued backing on Kashmir, Pakistan had been concocting stories of the nascent Communist Party of Pakistan making efforts to destabilise Pakistan. Ayesha Jalal writes in *The State of Martial Rule,* "Since the ceasefire in Kashmir, the Joint Services Intelligence (precursor of ISI) had been fabricating increasingly bizarre reports about the fledgling Communist Party and its purported plans to destabilise Pakistan."[89] This not only ensured US support to Pakistan on Kashmir but also huge economic and military aid. Nevertheless, US could never get from Pakistan what it desired, a landing site that was centrally positioned to take on both USSR and China. The carrot of such offer was always dangled by Pakistani rulers, right from Ayub Khan, in front of the drooling Americans. But they never got to eat it. This trend became a norm for other Pakistani rulers. Haqqani further wrote, "The United States had to be content with looking upon its investment in Pakistan as one that would bear fruit only over time. Ayub Khan's bargaining for greater military and economic assistance became a norm for its successors."

The Commonwealth Relation Office too formulated its own political perspective of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, in keeping with its desire to protect British interests. It was deeply influenced by the British Foreign Office's assessment of the emerging political crises in West Asia, at that time.

Keeping in mind the necessity of protecting its own geo-political interests, Britain felt that handing over the whole state of Jammu and Kashmir, including the Northern Areas, to India would not be in their interests. Thus, through their own people placed in influential positions in India and UNO, they manipulated events to suit their own vision. Creation of Pakistan, manipulating Nehru into referring the Pakistani invasion in Kashmir to the UN and India offering the Ceasefire Resolution; all flowed out of Britain's desire to address its

own geo-political and geo-strategic concerns as stated above. The UN Resolutions actually reflected how Britain wanted to reshape this part of the world to suit their strategic interests, rather than being a fair adjudicator of the dispute, resulting from Pakistan's invasion of the state.

Though Mountbatten had played a significant role in furthering British interests by convincing Nehru to take the case to UN, even he expressed his reservations about the British stand on the issue in the UN. In one of his reports he records, "Everybody here (in India) is now convinced that power politics and not impartiality are governing the attitude of the Security Council... Indian leaders counter this (*attempt to dispel this conviction*) by saying that the Anglo-American block apparently attaches so high a value on the maintenance of Muslim solidarity in the Middle East, that they are even ready to pay the price of driving India out of the Commonwealth, into the arms of Russia..."

That the subsequent events did not exactly take place in the anticipated manner reflects poorly on the myopic view of the British policy-makers, when the empire was winding down. The consequences of their policy, on which they wanted to shape the post-war world, have been quite contrary to their expectations; the same area that British was instrumental in separating from India, has turned into an irredentist and revisionist state and an epicentre of Islamic terrorism, that threatens the same powers which created it in the first place. Many years down the line, the same sentiment is reflected in a different context by Premen Addy. Nearly sixty years after the events, he writes, "...Meanwhile in the north and west of India was created an Army cantonment called Pakistan where are today seeded myriad agonies that wait to blight England's once green and pleasant land. Islamic terrorism, incubated in the very dominion whose seed was blessed with the holy water of the Raj, stalks the United Kingdom. The bomb plot designed to destroy trans-Atlantic

airliners in mid flight and the long gaol sentence awarded to the plotters — Tanvir, Hussein, Abdullah, Ahmed and Assad Sarwar — by London court, are further evidence of the looming Pakistan bred Islamic monster…"[90]

UN did not particularly cover itself with glory while deciding on the issue. By not ordering the invader to vacate areas occupied by it as result of its naked aggression, it legitimised such occupation by means of various resolutions that neither reflected the facts of the case brought before it, nor any realistic assessment based on the principle of natural justice and International law. Acceptance of the UN Resolutions by India ensured the permanent division of the state that would come to haunt it in the years to come. Accepting and implementing the UN resolutions only to the extent these suited various stakeholders, ensured that the seeds of abiding dispute were sown right then. The state of Jammu and Kashmir remains divided between the two belligerents; Pakistan has not reconciled itself to this position; India cannot let go of it, for that will negate the very foundations of its nationhood. There are other interested parties and the more the parties there are, more complicated becomes the problem.

Although India had committed to the UN to hold a referendum in Jammu and Kashmir, such an exercise was dependent on certain conditions which Pakistan was required to fulfill; it was dependent on the withdrawal of invaders and regular Pakistani troops from areas occupied by it. Pakistan did not honour that commitment. People's will had to be ascertained in the whole of the state once "law and order had been restored". With Pakistan firmly in control of a part of the state, including the Northern Areas (now renamed Gilgit–Baltistan), there was no way people's will could be ascertained in an impartial manner. The incontrovertible fact is that Pakistan never fulfilled a single commitment to facilitate the process of a plebiscite. In due course of time, quite a number of developments took place afterwards, which rendered the UN Resolutions redundant and

insignificant. This fact was acknowledged by none other than the Secretary General of the UN, Kofi Annan, who, during his visit to Pakistan and India in 2003, categorically stated in front of the waiting newsmen that "UN Resolutions of 1948 on Jammu and Kashmir had become irrelevant in the changed situation." Besides, whereas PoK continues to be ruled directly from Islamabad, people in Indian administered Jammu and Kashmir have freely taken part in elections to choose their own government. Despite some of these elections having been flawed (like in many other states of India), the fact remains that many elections (1977, 2002 and 2008) in the state have been free and fair, in which people participated in great numbers. Lately, the *Panchayat* elections held in 2011,too recorded a very high voters' turn-out.

Influential Leaders show Little Vision

Some important leaders exercised great influence on the political developments concerning the State of Jammu and Kashmir at this crucial juncture in history. Their thinking, individual traits and their perceptions had far-reaching consequences on the emerging scenario. Some of these leaders were carried away by the rush of historical forces at play; while others turned into mute spectators, waiting for the events to unfold. Some even became willing accomplices and catalysts of events which created problems that defy solutions to the present day.

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah

Under Sheikh Abdullah, NC, had made deep inroads into the rural areas of Kashmir and had a huge support base in the entire valley. However, it did not enjoy much support in either Ladakh or Jammu. On August 15, 1947, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah and other NC leaders and workers were behind the bars. They had been imprisoned for launching the "Quit Kashmir" movement against

the Maharaja. On persistent intervention of Mahatma Gandhi, who visited the state from August 1 to 4, 1947, and other Congress leaders, the Sheikh and his supporters were released on September 4, 1947. Prime Minister RC Kak became the first casualty of this visit, when his services were terminated soon thereafter. Whether Gandhi's visit had anything to do with this development, cannot be proved conclusively. Nevertheless, it was too much of a coincidence.

As mentioned earlier, Sheikh Abdullah had developed close rapport with the leadership of Indian National Congress, particularly with Nehru, to whom he had presented his NC as an anti-feudal mass movement, believing in the principles of socialism and secularism. But his relations with Muslim League were characterised by lack of trust, bordering on hostility. In fact, Sheikh Abdullah perceived the growing influence of Muslim League among the Muslims of Jammu region as a threat to his NC. Meanwhile, NC leaders, Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, who were in Lahore in the first week of October 1947, were asked to act as emissaries and contact Muslim League leaders and communist supporters of Pakistan. As these two leaders had good rapport with the latter, they were asked to bring about rapprochement between Sheikh Abdullah and Mohammed Ali Jinnah. However, Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan did not condescend to meet Sheikh Abdullah, due to their existing strained relations with him.[91] Writing about Jinnah's attitude towards him Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah writes in *Atish-e-Chinar*, "At that time Jinnah was intoxicated by power. He thought it below his dignity to meet the representative of a poor and resourceless nation. When this equation of power went against him, he woke up in panic from his dream. But by this time the snake had passed; only its line remained."[92]

By leading a mass movement against the Dogra Maharaja, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah had consolidated his position as the most

popular and important leader in the Valley. His rise, nevertheless, had something to owe to the British, from whom he had received enough encouragement and support against the Dogra ruler. The British had their own reasons for creating problems for the Maharaja. Hari Singh had taken a lead in the Chamber of Princes in the Round Table Conference in England, to plead for Indian Independence. This stand of the Maharaja had thoroughly annoyed the British. As a consequence, they were instrumental in engineering an uprising against him in the Valley under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah. It was the first of its kind in the princely states. Though, to the Congress, Sheikh Abdullah represented the leadership of the anti-feudal forces, persistently fighting the feudal system of the Maharaja for almost two decades, yet within the valley, the communal content and rhetoric of his politics could scarcely be hidden.

At a more personal level, Sheikh Abdullah was dictatorial and brooked no dissent. He treated his opponents not as political rivals but as enemies, who had to be crushed. Many of his contemporaries felt that he looked at himself as some kind of a Sheikh leading a Sheikhdom, much in vogue in the Arab world of that period. Besides, having opposed the state's accession to Islamic Pakistan, Sheikh Abdullah tried his best, both by deed and word, to prove that he was more Islamic than the Pakistan itself. In the process, he laid the foundations of Muslim communalism becoming a state policy under the garb of so called secularism.

His shifting stands all through his life left everyone, particularly the Kashmiris, in a state of limbo. While addressing a huge gathering of people at Hazratbal on October 5, 1945, he gave expression to his desire to acede to India, by stating, "...We cannot desire to join those (in Pakistan) who say that the people must have no voice in the matter (referring to Jinnah's opposition to let people of princely states decide their future). We shall be cut to pieces before we allow our alliance between this state and the people of this type..." At one stage he even

suggested to Nehru's emissary, Gopalaswamy Iyenger, that his interim government in the state be incorporated in the Constitution of India (Article 306 A- later Article 370) as a government in perpetuity. Later, when Pakistan was insisting on replacing him as a pre-condition for holding an impartial plebiscite, Sheikh Abdullah, who was member of the Indian delegation, said, rather undiplomatically, "There is no power on earth which can displace me from the position which I have there. As long as people are behind me, I will be there. The dispute arises when it is suggested that, in order to have free vote, the administration must be changed. To that suggestion, we say – No."[93] His psychological aberrations pushed him into a web of contradictions. His political moods changed rapidly with devastating consequences.

By now, Sheikh Abdullah's anti-Pakistan stance was so pronounced that chief of Pakistan's delegation, Sir Zaffar Ullah Khan, referred to his (Sheikh's) assertion ("We shall prefer death rather than join Pakistan. We shall have nothing to do with such a country") as a justification to reject holding plebiscite while Sheikh was running the administration of the state. No wonder, one of India's most renowned and respected journalists of that era, Frank Moraes had as early as 1951, noted, "Power had gone to Sheikh Abdullah's head. He struck me as a highly egocentric individual... He talked disdainfully of New Delhi... I have a feeling that even at that time, his mind was moving towards independence for the Valley of Kashmir, with himself as the Kashmiri equivalent of the Grand Moghul."[94]

Sheikh Abdullah had at no stage questioned the legality of accession nor had he justified Pakistan's aggression, which resulted in the present dispute. On the other hand he was quite categorical on both issues. In 1948, Sheikh Abdullah, with Nehru by his side, recited the following Persian verse, in front of thousands of Kashmiris in the heart of Srinagar at Lal Chowk: "*Man Tu Shudi, Tu Man Shudi; Ta Kas Na Goyad, Man DekramTu Degri*" (I became you and you became I; so none can say we are separate). He

reiterated the same in May 1949, while addressing himself to Nehru in Srinagar. He said, "I want you to believe that Kashmir is yours. No power in the world can separate us. Every Kashmiri feels that he is an Indian and that India is his homeland."[95] Speaking in the Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly on November 5, 1951, he said, "…Firstly, was Pakistan's action in invading Kashmir in 1947 morally and legally correct, judged by any norm of international behavior? Sir Owen Dixon's verdict on this issue is perfectly plain. In unambiguous terms he declared Pakistan the aggressor. Secondly, was the Maharaja's accession to India legally valid or not? Legality of accession has not been seriously questioned by any responsible or independent authority..."

Speaking about the arrival of Indian military forces in Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah is on record to have stated, "When for the first time people of Srinagar saw the incoming planes from India and the tanks of the Indian Army passing through the streets here, their disappointment and anguish was turned into joy and happiness. The people here, Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, heaved a sigh of relief, knowing that their honour and dignity could now be safeguarded. We must not forget that time…" One day he would assert that the relationship established between Kashmir and India was irreversible by categorically stating that the relationship was "irrevocable and no force on earth can render us asunder."[96] The next day, his ambivalence would be all too apparent. Sheikh Abdullah, on whose assurance and support Nehru agreed to accept the accession, turned hostile even before the ink had dried on the Instrument of Accession. He reneged on almost all issues on which he had assured Nehru and Sardar Patel, personally. His shifting and alarming stance can be gauged from what he said in March 1952, "...neither the Indian Parliament nor any other Parliament outside the State has any jurisdiction over our State…"[97] A few days after he had said this, he came out with another astounding proposition suggesting that "India and Pakistan could

again get re-united and becoming one country,"[98] with Kashmir serving as a bridge between the two. In fact, he shoulders the greatest responsibility for preventing the state's integration with the rest of the country. Unfortunately for India, he alone had the stature and authority to do that. But he chose prevarication and ambivalence, with grave consequences for all concerned. India could not do much, as Nehru had put all his eggs in NC's basket, controlled firmly by Sheikh Abdullah.

Having earned the unquestioned loyalty of his people, Sheikh Abdullah became dictatorial and intolerant of dissent. He fell victim to the manipulations of international power-play. Sheikh Abdullah's inconsistent stand, which resulted from his political opportunism, got him entangled into a web of contradictions. These contradictions created grave political instability in Kashmir and mistrust between India and Pakistan. In due course, this trust deficit led to lack of confidence between the two neighbouring countries, which prevented rapprochement between the two. Complexity involved in resolving the Kashmir dispute has a lot to do with Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's attitude during those crucial days.

The story of Sheikh Abdullah is that of a "patriot, once passionately devoted to his people's welfare, but one whose patriotism was too shallow to reject the temptations of power. Once a fighter, he turned into an opportunist and, worse, a dictator who at the end found himself entangled in the web of his own methods and policy"[99]. It is conceded even by his admirers, that he died a bitter man.

Maharaja Hari singh

Due to their eccentric behavoiur and lavish life style — while their subjects eked out a miserable poverty-stricken lives — a large number of princes, rajas, nawabs and maharajas, ruling various states had become a butt of ridicule among their subjects and were

viewed with derision. But Maharaja Hari Singh did not fall into this category. He was a man of great Rajput character, possessing true royal dignity. Born on September 23, 1895 at Jammu; Hari Singh was son of Raja Amar Singh, brother of Maharaja Pratap Singh. The latter had no children and hence Hari Singh ascended to the throne. Having studied in Mayo College, Ajmer, he had been exposed to the modern values and liberal British thought. From his early days as a ruler, he displayed a reformist streak while administering his state. He respected all religions and treated people of different castes and faiths equally. In his first public speech after ascending to the throne in 1925, he said, "If I am considered worth governing this state, then I will say that for me all communities, religions and races are equal. As a ruler I have no religion... All religions are mine and my religion is 'Justice.'"[100] He introduced several reforms in economic, social, legal, educational and agricultural fields.

The 'Agricultural Relief Act' that he enacted set free thousands of peasants and rural poor from the clutches of moneylenders and creditors. Similarly, the 'Land Alienation Act' bestowed ownership rights on the tiller. Through this 'Act' the landless were also given ownership rights over state land. The forced labour called *begaar* (n. 13, p. 47) was totally abolished. The department of rural development established in 1937, was made responsible for implementing plans for rural development. He established industries which utilised raw materials available within the state for manufacturing various goods. By exempting these industries from various taxes, he ensured that their produce remained competitive in the market. The goods manufactured included matchboxes, carpets, tents, woodwork articles, silk yarn and tannery products. By setting up emporia in Srinagar and Jammu, he provided ready markets for the traders. He got tourist facilities developed at some tourist resorts, like Pahalgam and Gulmarg. By establishing the Jammu and Kashmir Bank, which took over the functions of the state treasury, he took a path-breaking

step. With its branches at many places in the state, the bank played a crucial role in the state's economy in the years to come. He also provided essential food items at controlled prices to the poor through rationing; when World War II created their scarcity. Thus Maharaja Hari Singh did his best to improve the economic condition of his subjects.

Health care in the state, which at that time was rather rudimentary and mainly taken care of by the foreign missionaries with their limited resources, also attracted his attention. In 1943, he opened Sri Maharaja Gulab Singh (SMGS) Hospital in Jammu, and in 1945, Sri Maharaja Hari Singh (SMHS) Hospital at Srinagar. With a capacity of 320 beds, it was arguably the biggest hospital in the country at that time. With tuberculosis taking a heavy toll of life during those days, he established a separate Tuberculosis Department for better management of the disease. To prevent recurrence of outbreak of cholera epidemic, which had killed many people in 1935, The Maharaja got a special branch opened in the Public Health Department, whose specific task was to provide potable water to the people. He also got a large number of tanks constructed, and bore-wells dug up for this purpose.

Realising that education would determine the future of the state's population, he made primary education compulsory for all children in 1930. A large number of schools were opened in many towns under this scheme. These were called *Jabri* (compulsory) schools locally. In addition, education till secondary level, was made free. Deserving students from poor families were selected by scholarship selection boards for grant of scholarships.

The Maharaja seemed fully conscious of the age old social evils that has been the bane of India from times immemorial. He introduced reforms in his administration to address these issues; prominent among these being untouchability, female infanticide, trafficking

of women and child marriage. Two committees established in 1926 and 1929 to address the menace of female infanticide recommended severe action against the guilty. Similarly, through an ordinance, the lawful age for marriage was fixed at 14 and 18 for girls and boys respectively. Legislation to declare prostitution and other social evils illegal, was introduced. Dhandevi Memorial Fund was established for performing the marriage of poor girls. To encourage widow remarriage, he removed certain legal provisions which encouraged this social evil.

He fought the evil of untouchability by taking bold steps. In 1932, he permitted access to all schools, colleges and wells to 'untouchables'. The doors of temples were thrown open to them on November 2, 1932. In 1941, as a logical culmination of this process of reform, untouchability was declared a crime. To set a personal example; the Maharaja took the lead by worshipping *Harijan*[101] girls during *Navratras*.[102] Another sensitive reform he introduced in the state was to bring Rajputs and Brahmans at par as far as the application of laws of the state were concerned. Prior to his reign, people belonging to these two communities could not be handed out death sentences. He removed this disparity by making capital punishment equally applicable to them also. Maharaja Hari Singh treated his Muslim subjects with with care and dignity. In the princely states, his administration was among the best. He never treated Muslims of the state as a 'purchased commodity' as Sheikh Abdullah and other Kashmiri Muslims were apt to call him. Personal lives of Dogra rulers were also above board.

The Maharaja, as the head of the civil administration and commander-in-chief of the army, was a repository of all powers. However, many constraints had been imposed on him by the British. Being the paramount power, the British exercised their veto through the Crown Representative, called the British Resident. This had

severely curtailed the Maharaja's powers. As long as the British ruled India, the Maharaja could not even appoint his own prime minister, without the approval of the Viceroy. To complicate matters further, he was a poor political negotiator, unlike his great-grandfather, Maharaja Gulab Singh. Indeed, at this point in time, the Maharaja was clearly on the wrong side of history. He found himself in quite a bind, having burnt his boats with all those who mattered. On the one hand, The Muslim League leaders did not trust him, and on the other, Kashmiri masses led by Sheikh Abdullah had been fighting his rule for the past two decades. He had some support in Jammu region as he was considered one of their own. But the popular mood among the majority of the population in his state had, irrevocably, turned against him. He could never see eye to eye with Jawahar Lal Nehru, who had all along supported his nemesis, Sheikh Abdullah. His dislike for Sheikh and Nehru was therefore mutual and permanent.

He also faced the scourge of the paramountcy. Hari Singh had rebuffed Mountbatten, the first Governor General of the Dominion of India, as "Hari Singh had refused to abide by Mountbatten's advice to join Pakistan. Mountbatten, as later events proved, had not forgotten the slight Hari Singh had caused to him. The Maharaja did not allow himself to be arraigned before the man, who had spared no efforts to push his state into Pakistan."[103] Therefore, at critical moments, he found himself totally abandoned and isolated.

The Maharaja was faced with another dilemma. According to his thinking, acceding to India would mean sharing with or handing over power to his arch enemy, Sheikh Abdulla. If he acceded to Pakistan, he was sure that the position of minorities under the rule of Muslim theocratic government would be intolerable. Also, he was under tremendous pressure from Hindus of the state, not to accede to Pakistan. Left to himself, he would have, like many other rulers of

princely states acceded to India in good time. But the advice rendered by Mountbatten, Nehru and other Congress leaders to the effect that the Government of India would not object to his acceding to Pakistan, was a broad hint to him to actually do so. This unsolicited advice created further confusion in his mind. For him, the only alternative left was to remain independent. This led to his prevarication and indecision, which in due course, played an important role in the creation of 'Kashmir problem'. His misfortune lay in the fact that he was fated, as many kings before him, to preside over the dissolution of his own empire over which he exercised little control.

Jawahar Lal Nehru

Nehru strode India like a colossus. At the time of independence, the mysterious death of Subash Chandra Bose in an air crash in 1945, had removed one of the two persons who could come in the way of his becoming independent India's first prime minister. The formidable Sardar Patel, was neutralised by Gandhi by making known his preference for Nehru. Nevertheless, Sardar's presence in Nehru's cabinet as his deputy prime minister, also holding the home portfolio, did, to some extent, act as a check on Nehru's romantic idealism. But the Sardar did not live long enough and his exit from the scene in the early years of Nehru's rule, removed even that moderating influence on Nehru. Gandhi's death, before that, had removed from the scene the only person who could rein in Nehru.

As the darling of Indian masses, who was synonymous with the long struggle for independence alongwith Gandhi, Nehru enjoyed absolute power in running the affairs of the Republic. Partition of the country, communal holocaust and the history's greatest mass exodus that followed it, Gandhi's death and Pakistani invasion in October 1947, could have tested even the best of leaders, leave alone an inexperienced leader of a newly independent country. Nehru

faced these and many other challenges in his life with courage and weathered every storm effectively. Justifiably, he is considered the builder of modern India. In his life time and after, he received great admiration from every corner of the globe. Undoubtedly, he was one of the most remarkable persons of twentieth century. Speaking at the 23rd Jawahar Lal Nehru Memmorial IFFCO (Indian Farmers and Fertilizers Corporation) lecture, Dr Karan Singh said of him, "Nehru was a unique personality of twentieth century — an ardent freedom fighter, a competent administrator, a planner and a visionary thinker, an author and a world statesman, who had left behind a remarkable legacy."[104] Nehru, indeed, was all that and much more.

Nehru, however, was not pragmatic enough in his approach to international affairs. His handling of Kashmir and China left much to be desired. Indus Water Treaty, which he signed during his visit to Karachi on September 19, 1960, was nothing short of a sell-out, as it deprived us of our legitimate rights over the waters of Indus, Jhelum and Chenab for generation of hydroelectricity, navigation and irrigation. This agreement was signed despite Pakistan's unilateral abrogation of River Waters Treaty of May 1948. Nehru himself confessed as much, when on November 30, 1960, he stated in parliament, "We purchased a settlement if you like; we purchased peace to that extent and it is good for both countries." Much after he left the scene, generations of Indians have known no peace whatsoever. About China, Nehru was, clearly off the mark by a mile. At one point, he said, "It is not easy to imagine even any aggression… from that great country, China."[105]

One of the classic examples of his flawed judgement was the manner in which he dealt with China, as far as Tibet was concerned. Close links that existed between India (through Jammu and Kashmir) and Xinjiang are well-known. Aksai Chin plateau, which is as big as Switzerland, was always part of Kashmir, long before

Xinjiang became part of China, during the Manchu rule. The title of Dogra rulers of Jammu and Kashmir, right uptil the last Maharaja, Hari Singh, clearly mentions this.[106] The close relationship between India and Xinjiang has been well-established by explorations of Aurial Stien who called it Serindia; *seres* being China's old name. His collection of archeological evidence clearly points to the fact that Buddhism had undoubtedly traveled there from Kashmir Valley. In fact, Hinduism, Buddhism, Kharoshti and Sanskrit, that thrived here, were all India's contribution to Xinjiang. Kanishka (see chapter-1), the celebrated Kushan King who ruled Kashmir in 100 BCE and whose empire spread till Mathura, came from Xinjiang. Ashok Malik writes, "Over centuries, India and China have rarely cross-fertilised. At two points they did intersect — Xinjiang (Serindia) in the west and Vietnam-Cambodia region (Indo-China) in the east."[107]

During the British rule, from 1890 onwards, India had its own consulate at Kashgar, its main trading hub, which fell on the famed silk route. The head of the consulate, a member of the Indian Political Service, used to report to the Viceroy's Council and not to Britain. The arrangement continued till as late as 1951; for four years after the British had left. It was during the tenure of Sir George Macarteny in 1904, that he was granted full diplomatic recognition. Before that, he was named as the Special Assistant for Chinese Affairs for the British Resident in Kashmir. The Consulate served the purpose of acting as eyes and ears of the British government for keeping a close watch on Russians in the *Great Game* (see n. 17, p. 133). Its other important function was to assist the Indian traders there as trade between India and Xinjiang flourished those days. How the Indian consulates in Kashgar and Lhasa got closed despite such close relationship is again a tragic story.

It can be attributed to Nehru's lack of understanding and appreciation of India's geo-strategic compulsions. The Chinese Prime Minister had given a verbal assurance to Nehru that friendly China would take care of India's interests. "The closure was the

precursor to the stealthy construction of Karakoram Highway linking Xinjiang and Tibet and the formal occupation of Aksai Chin."[108] All this happened due to the policy of appeasement adopted by Nehru towards both, Pakistan and China. This is confirmed when Nehru refused the US offer to India of a permanent seat in the UNSC, which till then had been held by Taiwan. In Shashi Tharoor's words, "He (Nehru) insisted that the seat be given to China." Nehru's preposterous reason for declining the offer was that he did not want US to marginalise China. Incidentally, in the UNSC, it was Nationalist Chinese delegation (representing Taiwan at that time) that came to India's rescue on number of occasions during the Kashmir debate, despite the fact that India was and continued to be in the forefront of unseating it and replacing it by communist China.

During the debate in the UN on Korean war too, when the UN branded China an aggressor, India refused to go along with the world body, on the specious plea that it will serve no purpose. After helping China in getting a permanent seat in the Security Council, how did China pay back the debt of gratitude? It invaded us in 1962; it strongly opposed and continues to oppose a similar seat for India. Such hostile Chinese policy continues to the present day; perhaps, a direct result of the policy of appeasement followed by Nehru.

Nehru ran India's foreign policy according to his own vision, based more on his own view point rather than on the national consensus on India's vital strategic interests. Krishna Menon says in his autobiography, "We had no precedent to fall back on because India had no foreign policy of her own until she became independent… our policy therefore necessarily rested on the intuition of one man, who was Foreign Minister, Jawahar Lal Nehru."[109] The British took full advantage of Nehru's discomfort with politico-military affairs and succeeded in manipulating him in the manner that suited their interests. According to Lieutenant General EA Vas, "Nehru hoped

to create a world where nations, instead of forming groups to act against each other, would learn to eschew conflict and settle their disputes in a peaceful manner. He felt that India, with its philosophy and idealistic past, could provide a lead in this direction. He placed his faith in UNO. Overlying his idealism was his hatred for war and of all things military. Thus his intellectual make-up lacked an important dimension; he gave no deep thought to politico-military matters. This prevented him from making sound security decisions."[110] Nehru's thinking permeated the whole Congress Party, which chose to follow Nehruvian model that lacked appreciation and understanding of India's strategic interests. The British found it easy to deal with Congress leaders when it came to protecting/furthering their own geo-political interests.

After the accession of the state to India, Nehru had to repeatedly give in to Sheikh Abdullah's intransigence and arm-twisting, because India had nowhere to go. Nehru had ignored the Maharaja as the legitimate representative of the people of the state, who alone had the powers of signing the Instrument of Accessions, as per the Indian Independence Act, 1947. Nehru had thoughtlessly brought Sheikh Abdullah into the deal by bestowing on him the status of representing his people. The Sheikh had neither asked for any such favour nor was he an elected representative of his people. Such unique authority was bestowed on him by Nehru, and by implication, by the Government of India. To complicate the matters further, Nehru gave assurances which lacked legal sanction and were too complicated to be implemented. Writes Sandhya Jain, "Nehru, like Burbon, forgot nothing and learnt nothing. For reasons that defy cogent analysis, the Maharaja's accession was not treated as final, at par with the accession by other princes. The Hindu king of the critical state was treated like a pariah and a dangerous concept of 'Muslim precedence' was granted to this Muslim majority region, laying foundations for the erosion of India's civilisational ethos in the critical Himalayan frontier, and subsequently across the land..."[111]

Jinnah

Jinnah's strength lay in his intellectual brilliance and force of his arguments. When carried out along narrow lines, he turned himself into a formidable political opponent. He was the face of Muslim League and an undisputed leader of the newly emerged Pakistan. A decade before independence, no one could have imagined that a new nation, Pakistan, would be a reality in such a short time; but here it was. Its coming into being was a tribute to Jinnah's persistence and dogged determination to see it through. All those who subscribed to his viewpoint looked up to him as the chief protagonist of their independent country. Allama Iqbal described him as "The only Muslim in India today to whom the community has a right to look for safe guidance..."[112] But the forces let loose by Jinnah's confrontationist policy, executed through 'Direct Action', based on purely communal agenda, played havoc with both Hindus and Muslims. After partition, there was little trust left between the two nations to resolve the complicated Jammu and Kashmir problem, through mutual dialogue and a spirit of give and take. Pakistan complicated the problem further by launching its invasion to wrest the state by force. It foreclosed any option of negotiated settlement of the state's accession by opting for military solution that ruined its own case. Whatever chances there still existed to resolve the issue, even after this conflict was over, were permanently buried in the UN, that worked more as a handmaiden of Britain and its allies, rather than as a neutral judge.

Jinnah, therefore, played no small role in creating the Kashmir imbroglio. His successors have kept up the tradition.

Others

The other influential leaders whose politics impacted the developments in Kashmir were, Mirwaiz Maulvi Yousuf Shah, Chaudhary Abbas and Ghulam Ahmed Dar who made Islam and,

therefore, Pakistan, as their rallying cry. Yousuf Shah, as the religious head of a segment of population mainly residing in downtown Srinagar, had a fanatical following. They were antagonistic to both NC and Congress and close to the ideology of Muslim League. Chaudhary Abbas, who at one time was close to Sheikh Abdullah, broke off from him after Sheikh Abdullah formed the NC. He now headed MC. His party had little influence in the valley, though it had gained some strength among the Muslims of Jammu region due to its affinity with Jinnah's Muslim League. Subsequently, he went to PoK, where he headed the so-called 'Azad Kashmir Government', till 1951, when he resigned.

Sardar Mohammad Ibrahim, who had raised the banner of revolt in Jammu earlier, too became an important voice in the PoK, later. However, both he and Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas became strong critics of Pakistan for lack of democracy prevailing in PoK. Ghulam Ahmed Dar, alongwith Syed Shaḥabudin, had established Jammat-e-Islami (JeI) at Shopian, three years after the creation of NC. Though JeI of Kashmir was not part of JeI of India, it had the potential to incite religious passions, whenever the situation demanded. In due course of time, all the three above mentioned parties/persons became Pakistan's proxy in the state, to be put to use whenever the need was felt. Despite little support in the state, their fortunes rose and fell to keep pace with the fortunes of Pakistan, their mentor across the border. Their leader was Jinnah.

Refugees: The Inevitable By-products of War

The 1947–48 war, like any other war before or after it, was not devoid of its human dimension. Number of people turned refugees overnight, with Pakistan becoming home to nearly 525,000 refugees (3,75,000 of these in PoK) and India receiving 226,000 (181,000 in Jammu and Kashmir). Hindu and Sikhs refugees faced great difficulties. Those who fled from areas of the state, which now came, under Pakistan's occupation, were never rehabilitated. They left behind

everything at places they fled from and received nothing when they crossed over to this side of the state. On the other hand, huge estates and properties left behind by those Muslims who chose to migrate to PoK and Pakistan, were taken over by the state government. Over a period of time, these were handed over to Muslims or the trusts owned by them, surreptitiously. The Hindus and Sikhs were left high and dry despite the fact that properties and temple estates left behind by them in Pakistan and PoK, were taken over by the Muslims there or appropriated by the Pakistan government.

A large number of religious places were put to mundane use by razing these to the ground. Even worse was the fate of those who had migrated to the Jammu and Kashmir state from that part of Punjab which had now become part of Pakistan. These refugees had been provided shelter by the Maharaja during the communal holocaust of 1947. After the Maharaja was removed from the scene, Sheikh Abdullah did not permit thousands of Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan and PoK to settle in Kashmir in 1947–48. Even today, they are stateless, not even counted among the state population. On the other hand, Muslim refugees coming from far and wide were all received by the state administration with open arms and quietly settled in the state. These included refugees from Tibet and Xinjiang, (where they had migrated two centuries ago), those from PoK, who had trickled into the border districts of Jammu region during the 1965 and 1971 wars, and Afghan refugees who had settled in the Valley at the end of World War II. As a matter of fact, most of the cadres of Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM) and Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) in the Jammu region were provided by these refugees, when militancy spread to this region in the middle of 1990s. Their resettlement and rehabilitation in the state was done to sustain and further strengthen the dominance of Muslims in the demographic composition of the state. Between 1947 and 1950, thousands of Dogra Rajpūts and Punjabi speaking businessmen were

forced to leave the valley, despite the fact that they had been living in Kashmir for over ten decades. During the same period, assistance was provided to a large number of Muslim refugees from Sinkiang and adjoining areas to settle in the valley.

Notes

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6. Ibid.
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13. Walter Crocker, *Nehru, A Contemporary Estimate* (Random House, 1965).
14. n. 5. pp. 15–16.
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17. Narinder Singh Sarilla, n. 15, pp. 194–195.
18. Ibid.
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21. Jawahar Lal Nehru: *The Discovery of India*, (John Day Company, London, 1946), p. 355.

22. Joseph Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir,* p. 128 (Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 128.
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24. Dr MK Teng, *Kashmir Sentinel,* December 2006 and March 2007.
25 Joseph Korbel, n. 22.
26. KH Khursheed *Memories of Jinnah,* (Oxford University Press, Karachi, 1990) and audio recording of discussions on BBC on November 25, 1999, in the series "Conflicting opinion in Jammu and Kashmir" — participants were Prof Alistair Lamb, author of '*Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy*', Sir Mark Tully and Dr Waqar Ahmed of BBC, Urdu Service.
27. Ibid.
28. AG Noorani, *Frontline,* November 27, 1992, in review of Alistair Lamb's *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy.*
29. Lt Gen Sir James Wilson and Lt Gen (Dr.) ML Chhiber n. 8.
30. Ibid., Part I.
31. Lt Gen Gul Hassan; *Memoirs* (Karach: Oxford University Press, 1995). Lt Gen Gul Hassan had recently relinquished the appointment of ADC to Jinnah, but was again asked to act as Jinnah's ADC during the Latter's visit there.
32. Lt Gen Sir James Wilson, KBE, MC, DL (Retd) and Lt Gen (Dr.) M.L Chhiber, PVSM, AVSM, (Retd), n. 8.
33. Ibid.
34. Tariq had been a Moore General who had led the Muslim forces in Spain, over a thousand years ago. Maj Gen Mohamad Akbar Khan, DSO, subsequently rose to the high office of Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff. However, later he was imprisoned for his anti-government activities.
35. Robert Montague, Modern Nations and Islam, *Foreign Affairs,* July, 1952, p. 581, Quoted by Joseph Korbel in his book, *Danger in Kashmir* (Oxford University Press,London,1952) p. 75.
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45. Appendix 'A' — J&K Div ISUM (Intelligence Summary), No. 43 for the period from 29 August to 08 September. (*USI Journal,* July- September, 2008).

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49. Ibid., p. 225.
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59. Gen Musa, *Jawan to General: Recollections of a Pakistani Soldier* (ABC Publishers, New Delhi 1985).
60. Joseph Korbel, n. 22., p. 130.
61. Col SK Bose: *USI Journal*, July- September 2003, Volume XXXIII No 553.
62. Lt Gen Sir James Wilson, KBE, MC, DL (Retd) an Lt Gen (Dr.) M.L Chhiber, PVSM, AVSM, (Retd), n. 8.
63. Ibid.
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65. Air Marshal KC Karriappa (Retd), *Biography of Field Marshal KM Karriappa* (Prabhat Prakashan, 2009).
66. Major General Hira Lal Atal, *Nehru's Emissary to Kashmir*, (Army Education Store, New Delhi, 1972), pp. 146–147.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid.
70. Joseph Koebel, n. 22., p. 147.
71. Ibid., p. 131.
72. Ibid., p. 130.
73. DR MK Teng; *Kashmir Sentinel*, December, 2006 and March, 2007.
74. Captain SK Tikoo (Retd), "Sardar Patel — The Bismarck of India." *Koshur Samachar*, December, 2010.
75. Joseph Korbel, *n. 22.*, p. 136.
76. He was a leading statesman and former Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, who later headed the Indian delegation to the United Nations.
77. *Kashmir Problems (1952–1992)- Unsolved-Unattended*: Iona Enterprise, New Delhi, July 30, 1992.

78. Joseph Korbel, n. 22., p. 117.
79. One of the clauses of this Agreement states, "That the two countries are resolved to settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means agreed upon between them..."
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81. *Command Paper* 2895: referred to by Joseph Korbel, n. 22., p. 47.
82. *Delhi Express,* September 8, 1952.
83. Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg: *On the Way to Golden Harvest,* (Government of Jammu and Kashmir), pp. 4–5).
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89. Ayesha Jalal, *State of Martial Rule - The State of Pakistan's Economy of Defence.* (Cambridge University Press, 1990).
90. Premen Addy, *Pioneer,* September 28, 2009.
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92. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, *Atish-e-Chinar* (Ali Mohammad and Sons, Srinagar, 1986).
93. *Security Council Official Records,* Third Year. Nos; 16–35, pp. 23–25.
94. Frank Moraes, *Witness to an Era.* (Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1973).
95. Joseph Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir* (Oxford University Press, 1952) p. 206.
96. Speech in the State Constituent Assembly on April 14, 1952.
97. Joseph Korbel, n. 22., p. 206.
98. *The Hindu,* April 12, 1952.
99. Joseph Korbel, n. 22.
100. VK Wattal: *Koshur Samachar,* July 2010, p. 23.
101. This is the name given to 'Untouchables' by Mahatma Gandhi. Harijan is combination of two words: *Hari* - one of Lord Krishna's many names and *Jan,* meaning people. When combined, it means people of the God.
102. Nine days devoted to the worship of Goddess Durga. The event which falls in October-November every year is named and celebrated differently in various parts of India.
103. Ram Kishen Bhat: *Kashmir News Network (KNN)*: downloaded from KPNetwork@yahoogroups.com on May 17, 2008.
104. *Pioneer,* November 21, 2010.

105. *The New York Times,* February 11, 1954.
106. Maharaja Hari Sigh's official title as it appears in the 'Instrument of Accession' was- "*Shriman Indar Mahandar Rajrajeshwar Maharajadhiraj Shri Hari Singhji, Jammu Kashmir Naresh Tatha Tibbet adi Deshadhipati*".
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108. Swapan Dasgupta, *The Times of India*, November 2009.
109. *Pioneer,* February 16, 2010.
110. *Role of Armed Forces in a Democracy: A Review of 50 years of Politico-Military Decision-Making*: USI Journal, October-December 1998.
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112. *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah*, (Kashmir Bazaar, Lahore), p. 19.

9

ARTICLE 370

"There is nothing sacrosanct about Article 370".

—Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah

Maharaja Hari Singh signed the standard 'Instrument of Accession' on October 26, 1947, which other rulers too had signed. Therefore, he was bound by the same obligations as other states. All such states reserved the right to convene their own Constituent Assemblies, in order to formulate their own respective constitutions. Indeed, Mysore and Saurashtra States' Union did institute such Constituent Assemblies. After Sheikh Abdullah and other NC leaders were released from jail (nearly two months after the British had left), they did not specify any conditionality that would, in any way, impinge upon the state's accession to India. The only condition they had laid was to ensure that the "State power be handed over to the people — a condition to which the Government of India had already committed itself."[1] Therefore, the subsequent assertion by some vested interests that the NC had agreed to a conditional accession of the state to India is a distortion of history. The contention of these vested interests that the state had been assured of its autonomous status due to its Muslim majority was an afterthought and pure fabrication. No assurances on any such special provision were either sought or given.

Matters concerning the accession became complicated as the British were keen to protect some of the powers and privileges of the princes after the former's withdrawal from India. Therefore, Lord Mountbatten had convinced the Indian political leadership to accept the accession of the States based on the Cabinet Mission Plan. This envisaged only defence, communication and external affairs being handed over to the Union, leaving a vast segment of residuary constitutional powers with the princes. This emboldened Pakistan, which went a step further and "expressed its willingness to accept accession on just two counts, i.e., defence and foreign affairs and leaving communication as well as state troops, within the control of the states!"[2]

The integration of the states into the Indian Union was not as smooth as anticipated. Even the constitution of Constituent Assemblies of the states was delayed. Finally, in May 1949, a conference was held in Delhi to smoothen the process. This conference was attended by prime ministers of the states and the Negotiating Committee of the Constituent Assembly. The Conference decided to entrust the Constituent Assembly of India with the task of drawing up the constitution of the states. Consequently, during a separate meeting on May 14, 1949, attended by Jawaharlal Lal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Sheikh Abdullah and some officials, it was proposed that the Instrument of Accession alone should form the basis of the constitutional relationship between Jammu and Kashmir and the Union of India. These leaders further opined that this relationship will continue till the State's own constituent assembly evolved a fresh set of constitutional provisions to replace the existing relationship. Nehru pleaded with the leaders of the state that the Constituent Assembly of India will formulate a set of constitutional provisions which will protect and safeguard the equality, liberty and freedom of the people of the States, as envisaged in the Objective Resolution adopted by it. "He readily agreed to modify the scheme of the federal division of powers, the Constituent Assembly had evolved, in respect

of Jammu and Kashmir and accepted to reserve wider orbit of powers, including residuary powers, for the State government."[3]

In their protracted negotiations with Indian leaders, the NC leaders even went to the extent of rejecting the basic feature of the Indian Constitution, which guaranteed the right to equality and duty of the government to protect the minorities on the plea that such a guarantee was contrary to the spirit of the reforms undertaken by the Interim Government, which Sheikh Abdullah now headed.

"After protracted negotiations, an agreement was finally reached between the state leaders and the representatives of the Constituent Assembly of India which underlined the inclusion of the state in the basic structure of the Indian Constitution and the application of the provisions of the Constitution of India to the state, pertaining to the territorial jurisdiction of the Union of India, Indian citizenship, rights and related constitutional safeguards, principles of state policy and the jurisdiction of the Supreme court."[4]

Besides other things, it was also agreed that the Constituent Assembly will be empowered to determine, with the approval of the President of India, the extension of any other provision of the Constitution of India, to the State. Nehru followed this up by forwarding to the leaders of the NC a written document that contained the gist of the agreement. Nehru was confident that the document would find favour with the NC, as the party at its session in Srinagar held in 1948, had passed a resolution that categorically stated, "After mature consideration of the issue, it (National Conference) is definitely of the opinion that Kashmir with its unflinching faith in 'New Kashmir' and with a very advanced outlook of the fundamental issue, cannot find its proper place in Pakistan, which today has become the main citadel of reaction and decaying feudalism..."[5] However, the whole exercise proved futile as the NC leaders went back on their commitment after they reached Srinagar.

The issue came to a head when Gopalaswamy Aiyangar reached Srinagar with the draft provision of what had been agreed upon, for the approval of the NC leaders. After closed door meetings and much dilly-dallying, these provisions were placed before the Working Committee of the NC. However, the Working Committee produced an alternate draft, which Sheikh Abdullah sent to Aiyangar. This alternate draft reiterated his old position, i.e., that the constitutional relationship between the State and the Union be determined by the Instrument of Accession. A new set of proposals were, therefore, prepared by Aiyangar in the hope that these would be acceptable to the NC leaders. But they rejected these as well. Around the same time, the UN, due to its biased approach, was creating an adverse situation for India by insisting on demilitarisation of the state and preparing conditions for inducting a Plebiscite Administration there. Nehru, therefore, could ill-afford to have Sheikh Abdullah adding to his difficulties. Consequently, a revised draft proposal was prepared by Gopalaswamy Aiyangar in consultation with Mohammad Afzal Beg. This proposal envisaged inclusion of the State in the First Schedule of the Constitution of India, that describes its territorial bounds and the Seventh Schedule, which corresponds to the provisions made in the Instrument of Accession. The revised draft provisions were incorporated in Article 306 A of the draft Constitution of India. The Article 306 A subsequently became Article 370 at the revision stage.

Nehru accepted the concept of NC as if it was the only opinion that mattered in the whole state. His giving in to Sheikh Abdullah and his coterie at the very beginning of the accession of the State to India, emboldened the Sheikh to further demand that Article 306 A should "incorporate a clause that will recognise the present Interim Government of the State as a Government in perpetuity!"[6] However, this suggestion was strongly opposed by many members of the Constituent Assembly of India. They pointed out the anomalous constitutional absurdity this would create in a

democratic dispensation. After Aiyangar had conveyed his inability to include this provision in the said article, there was much sulking and threatening by the Sheikh and other NC leaders. However, they eventually fell in line and the grossly undemocratic provision was not included in the constitutional provision.

The Instrument of Accession signed on October 27, 1947, and Article 1 of the Indian Constitution, adopted on January 26, 1950, made Jammu and Kashmir State an integral part of India's territorial and constitutional jurisdiction. Article 370 was incorporated to mainly provide for gradual development of constitutional and legal relationship between the State and the Union. According to Jawaharlal Nehru, "we all wanted to leave it in a fluid condition because of various factors and gradually to develop the relationship. As a result of this, a rather unusual provision was made in our Constitution."[7] That provision is now in Article 370, in Part XXI in 'Temporary and Transitional Provisions.' Article 370 provides that:

(a) The provisions of Article 1 and Article 370 apply to Jammu and Kashmir by their own force. Other provisions of the Constitution will apply as the President may by order specify with the concurrence of the State Government.

(b) The power of Parliament to make laws for Jammu and Kashmir will be limited to:

   (i) Those matters of the Union List and the Concurrent List which the President may decide as corresponding to matters specified in the Instrument of Accession.

   (ii) Such other matters as the President may decide with the concurrence of the State Government.

(c) The President may declare that this Article shall cease to be operative or shall operate with such modification, but

recommendation of the Assembly should be obtained before issuing such an order.

It is a well-known fact that Article 306 (370) had to be incorporated because of the following circumstances that existed at that time:

- The UNSC was seized of the matter at that time.
- The war was still on.
- A huge chunk of state's territory was under the occupation of the aggressor.
- Kashmiris had been given an assurance that a Constituent Assembly would be formed and opportunity given to the people of the state to ascertain their views through a plebiscite, after certain pre-conditions had been met.

Article 370 was intended to be a purely temporary measure that reflected the existing realities of those turbulent times. This is clearly evident from the fact that the Article was included in the 'Transitional Provisions of the Constitution of India'. Indeed, such provisions were included in Article 370 which empowered the President of India to modify or even terminate the operation of its provisions by a notification, provided the recommendation to that effect were made by the Constituent Assembly of the State. Similarly, the President of India was empowered to extend to the state other provisions of the Constitution of India, with the concurrence of the state government. It is safe to say that the temporary provisions envisaged by Article 370, were meant to remain in operation during the existence of the Constituent Assembly of the State. Surely the founding fathers of the Constitution could not have visualised the permanent existence of the Constituent Assembly!

"The Constituent Assembly of India consisted of 299 members,

of whom 229 were elected from the Provinces and 70 from princely states, including Jammu and Kashmir. The Constitution was passed on November 26, 1949. It superseded all other agreements including the Instruments of Accession signed by the rulers of princely states, by which the states, including Jammu and Kashmir, had only surrendered defence, foreign affairs and communication to the Union Government. Besides, the rulers of Hyderabad, Mysore and Jammu and Kashmir adopted the Indian Constitution by proclamation."[8] This should have finally put the legal seal of approval on the matter of the State's accession with the rest of the country. But that was not to be.

Sheikh Abdullah was able to blackmail India into giving numerous concessions to Jammu and Kashmir State, quoting various provisions of its special status. Joseph Korbel writes, "Kashmir has also undergone radical development in her constitutional position. Principally, through the shrewd manipulation of Sheikh Abdullah and his associates, she has succeeded in securing privileged rights within the Republic of India which no other Indian State enjoys."[9] In due course, Article 370 created more problems than resolving any. Sandhya Jain writes, "...The special status granted to Sheikh Abdullah and his NC drove the nascent Republic crazy with their shifting stands on every negotiated issue. Article 370 is the enduring legacy of that poor exercise in statesmanship."[10]

In 1954, the constituent assembly of the state ratified the accession of the state with India and made an internal Constitution for Jammu and Kashmir (in lieu of Part VII of the Indian Constitution that is meant for administering other States). On November 17, 1956, it made a written commitment in the preamble to its newly framed Constitution, that Jammu and Kashmir was an integral part of India. Article 3 of the said Constitution also clearly and definitely stated, "The State of Jammu and Kashmir is and shall be an integral part of the Union of India." Ram Gopal writes, "The promise of ascertaining

the wishes of the people, in a way, stood fulfilled with the ratification of the State's accession to India finally and irrevocably by the duly elected Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir." However, it may be mentioned that despite a number of provisions of the Indian Constitution having been extended to the state over the last sixty years, it still retains absolute jurisdiction over vast areas of legislative power. Whereas citizens of Jammu and Kashmir are ipso-facto citizens of India, the vice versa is not the case; they cannot exercise the right of vote in the *Panchayat* or state elections. Non-state subjects do not have any right to settle there, nor can they own any property there. A woman citizen of the state loses her status as state subject and all other rights that it bestows on her, if she marries outside the state. Article 360, that allows for the declaration of state of financial emergency is not applicable to the state. Similarly, whereas Article 365 is not wholly applicable, Article 352 too has limited application.

The Legal Position

Kashmiri leaders, including those from mainstream political parties, state that abolition of Article 370 will result in the annulment of the state's accession to India. However, this is neither borne out by facts nor by legal interpretation of Article 370. The inclusion of the state within the First Schedule of the Constitution of India resulted from the signing of the Instrument of Accession itself, which in turn, was the product of Indian Independence Act, 1947. Legally, constitutionally or otherwise, the inclusion of Jammu and Kashmir State within the territorial bounds of India was independent of the Article 306A/370. "The accession of the states had brought about an irrevocable unification of the Princely States with the Union of India."[11] There is a misconception prevailing that it was the Constitution of India that constituted the State of India. The fact of the matter is that it was only declaratory of the State of India, which existed prior to the adoption of the Constitution and would not stand

dissolved even if the constitution were to be abrogated. The same applies to Article 370, which even if rescinded, would not dissolve the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Article 370 only defines the special relationship, in whose absence, the state would have been part of the constitutional organisation of India in the same manner in which other princely states (forming part of Group 'B' States) would have been placed. The fact is that Article 370 is not an enabling act; that definition applies only to the Instrument of Accession.

Questioning Union Parliament's powers to amend or repeal Article 370 appears to be based on the preposterous conclusion that Article 370 is more sacrosanct than the Constitution itself. Article 368, read with Article 13(2) and Article 355, empower the Union Parliament to amend or repeal any Article of the Constitution, including Article 370. Perhaps, the confusion created is directly related to the President's powers to abrogate or modify Article 370, before the Constituent Assembly was formed or during its lifetime. In such an eventuality, he had to obtain its recommendation. However, after the constituent assembly was dissolved in November 1956, President's powers to abrogate this temporary Article can no more be impeded, leave alone being questioned. Clause (3) of Article 370 of the Constitution of India clearly states, "Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing provisions of this article, the President may, by public notification, declare that this Article shall cease to be operative, only with such exceptions and modifications and from such date as he may specify." The restriction placed on the operability of this clause is added by the proviso, "The recommendation of the Constituent Assembly of the State referred to in clause (2) shall be necessary before the President issues such notification." However, this constitutional bar on the President has automatically been rendered ineffective, because the Constituent Assembly has ceased to exist.

The myth perpetuated by vested interests, driven by deep-rooted

prejudice, that Article 370 is an enabling Act, is a ploy to mislead the Indian masses in general and our ill-informed political leaders in particular. This is done with the sole objective of perpetuating the unrestricted powers of the vested interests in the state and their rule by decree, vested in them by Article 370. Even the convocation of the separate constituent assembly of the state was projected by these vested interests as proof of the state's autonomous existence. The fact is that the constitution of the constituent assembly of the State was the creation of the Constitution of India and drew all its powers therefrom. At one time, the NC leaders had even demanded plenary powers for the State's constituent assembly; a demand that was entirely unconstitutional. Such powers would have vested the Jammu and Kashmir's Constitutional Assembly with the authority to veto not only the constitutional relationship between the State and the Union of India, but also the very accession itself.

The Union Government's relationship with the State Government is regulated by Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order 1954, under the provisions of Article 370 itself. As per this order, the jurisdiction of the Parliament on Jammu and Kashmir is exercised through the President of India. Once Article 370 is done away with, the 1954 order will automatically stand annulled and Jammu and Kashmir will constitutionally come at par with other states. Notably, the demand for retaining Article 370 is confined to valley alone and even there, not everyone subscribes to this demand. The people of Jammu and Ladakh want abrogation of this divisive provision.

Circumstances of the State's accession with the Indian Union, which were preceded and followed by unusual and challenging events, cast their deep shadows on Kashmir issue. India should have been conscious of the machinations of Pakistan and its proxies in the valley on the one hand, and the attitude of Britain and its allies,

due to their own geo-political interests, on the other. Rather than taking every step with great caution and vision, Nehru allowed his fears, self-doubt and idealism to get the better of him. India had rejected the two-nation theory, based as it was, on establishing a theocratic state. It had, on the other hand, adopted democracy and secularism as the pillars of its sovereignty. Therefore, India did not have to be too defensive about the acceptance of the Jammu and Kashmir's accession to it. It unnecessarily gave written and verbal assurances to project to the world that the accession did not even remotely appear as usurpation and in fact, appeared to be morally and legally correct. It failed to gauge the difficulties involved in implementing those assurances which depended on formulating an acceptable frame work by disparate parties, whose mutual suspicions and clashing interests would never let that happen. Therefore, it was with this mind-set that India went about the process of assimilation of the State into the larger Union; over-cautiously, gradually and with measured steps. The first step in this gradual assimilation was the creation of special provision in its newly adopted constitution, namely, Article 370 (306A).

Article 370 has, over the years, become a bone of contention between those who advocate its abolition and those who want it to be retained on the statute. Kashmiri opinion is overwhelmingly opposed to its abolition; but that is mostly a result of being waylaid by the state's self serving political leadership, which has exploited the age-old sentiment of "Islam is in danger," by propagating that India will settle non-Muslims into Kashmir, thereby changing its Muslim majority demographic profile forever. In rest of the country, as far as the stand of various political parties on the issue is concerned, it is mostly dictated by their pandering to their respective vote banks. The fact of the matter is that, it was a temporary provision meant to serve a temporary purpose and, therefore, cannot be allowed to achieve a permanent status. As long as the provision remains operative, there

will never be total integration of the state with the rest of the country, emotionally or otherwise.

Impact of Article 370

Article 370 was clearly meant to be a temporary provision included in the Constitution to cater for the specific requirements of the troubled times immediately after India's independence and the State's accession to India. It was meant to remain in operation during the existence of the State's Constituent Assembly. As time passed, the vested interests within Jammu and Kashmir and the compulsions of various political parties outside the state to appease their vote banks, ensured its retention. No thought was spared by the votaries of 'the retention of Article 370' for the enormous potential this would have to wreak havoc on the unity and integrity of the country. It is the only state in India which has a constitution of its own.

To begin with, Article 370 has built emotional and psychological barriers between the people of Kashmir and the rest of India, thus fostering a psychology of separatism. Existence of this statute is used by Pakistan and its proxies in the valley to mock at the very concept of 'India being one from Kashmir to Kanyakumari'. It has kept alive the two-nation theory. Over a period of time, the separatist lobby in the state has used this barrier to build a mind-set of alienation. Such a possibility had been clearly visualised by many political stalwarts who comprised the Constituent Assembly of India. While speaking in the Constituent Assembly of India on October 17, 1949, one of its distinguished members, Hasrat Mohani had said, "The grant of special status would enable Kashmir to assume independence afterwards."

The vested interests in Kashmir, be these politicians, bureaucracy, businessmen, judiciary, etc., have misused Article 370 for their own nefarious purposes, by exploiting the poor and the down-trodden

people of the state. The rich have consistently used Article 370 to ensure that no financial legislation is introduced in the state, which would make them accountable for their loot of the state treasury. These include the provisions dealing with Gift Tax, Urban Land Ceiling Act, Wealth Tax, etc. This has ensured that the rich continue to grow richer and the common masses are denied their legitimate share of the economic pie.

Article 370 has also helped create power elites and local Sultans, who wield enormous power, which they use to trample upon the genuine demands of common people for public welfare. As no outsider can settle in the state and own any property there, the politically well-connected people stand to gain enormously. It is these influential people who make the rules, decide the price and determine the buyer, since any competition from an outsider is completely ruled out. This way, land resources are cornered by the rich and mighty, causing huge revenue losses to the state. These vested interests have gained much financial assistance from India which they have used to build separatist mindsets and secessionist lobbies with which they blackmail India.

To the gullible people of Kashmir, the abolition of Article 370 is projected as a catastrophic event that will sound the death knell of Kashmiri Muslim culture, but in actual fact, this argument is a ploy to prevent assimilation of Kashmiris into the national mainstream. That way, these power brokers continue to expand their fiefdom, perpetuate their hold on political and economic power and build a communal and obscurantist mindset, which in due course, serves as a breeding ground for creating a separatist mentality. The bogey of threat to the Kashmiri identity that the abolition of Article 370 will pose is merely a ploy to camouflage the political ambitions of the leaders. Actually, these very people cause great damage to Kashmiri culture, as no culture can survive without the stimulus of outside contact and opportunity to cross-fertilise. It was this mindset that has been responsible for creating the violent communal upsurge of

1989, which finally led to the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits. One of the main reasons for the failure of the state administration to respond to the anguished cries of the Kashmiri Pandits to provide them with adequate security in 1998–90, was that the state administration had been completely subverted from within by the radical anti-national elements, who had infiltrated into the system over a period of time. This infiltration had been made possible by the existence of Article 370. "Within the broad framework of the special status envisaged by Article 370, which isolated the state from rest of India, it was far easy for secessionist elements to infiltrate into the administrative cadres of the government."[12]

One of the worst human tragedies the state faces is the denial of basic democratic and citizenship rights to nearly 600,000 refugees from Pakistan who entered the state at the time of partition or as a result of wars between India and Pakistan, thereafter. These refugees have made the state their home for the last over six decades, yet neither they nor their children can get citizenship rights in the state, as result of the applicability of Article 370. They can neither vote nor fight election; they cannot get loans from the state nor seek admissions into various professional colleges of the state.

Article 370 has also been misused by political oligarchs to perpetuate their hold on power by preventing various democratic legislations from being applied to the state. Take the case of 'anti-defection law', which is a useful provision for preventing defections. This legislation vests the powers of deciding whether a legislator has defected or not, with the Speaker. However, in Jammu and Kashmir, the power has been vested with a party chief, thus turning the leader into a virtual dictator. Article 370 has also been used to deny a fair share of economic pie to both Ladakh and Jammu region (see chapter 18). Violent agitations that rocked Ladakh in July-September 1989, were the result of the resentment felt by Ladakhis at being treated unfairly by Kashmiris Muslims, who have a

stranglehold on political power in the state. It is ironic that whereas Article 370 provides all the political, economic, cultural and other safeguards to Kashmiris, the same provision is misused by Kashmiris to deny these very safeguards to the people of other regions of the State.

The citizens of Jammu and Kashmir become citizens of India automatically; whereas the citizens of India have no such right when it comes to their claiming a similar right in the state. Consequently, the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir can own property and settle anywhere in India. On the other hand, Article 370 prevents any Indian from claiming any such right. As early as 1932, Bertrand Glancy, Chairman of the Grievances Committee was compelled to write in his report: "The present definition of State Subject appears to be unduly rigid; domiciles in a state for a thousand years cannot, according to this definition, qualify a man. It would seem both unfair and inexpedient to deny the right to franchise to a man who has so far identified himself with local interests as to make his domicile in the state over a consecutive period of five years."[13] Dr BR Ambedkar had forewarned the country on this score in reply to Sheikh Abdullah's demand for a special status in the Constituent Assembly of India. He had said, "You want India to defend Kashmir, give Kashmir equal rights over India, but you deny India and Indians all rights in Kashmir. I am Law Minister of India, I cannot be a party to such betrayal of national interests."[14]

Notes

1. Dr MK Teng and CL Gadoo, *White Paper on Kashmir*, Joint Human Rights Committee for Minorities in Kashmir, (Jeoffry and Bell Inc., Delhi), p. 9.
2. Ibid., p. 10.
3. Ibid., p. 11.
4. Ibid., p. 12.
5. Josef Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir*, (Oxford University Press, 1952).
6. Dr MK Teng and CL Gadoo, n. 1.

7. Josef Korbel, n. 5.
8. Ram Gopal, online article, downloaded from KPNetwork@ yahoogroups.com on July 21, 2009.
9. Josef Korbel, n. 5.
10. Sandhya Jain: *Pioneer*, January 5, 2010.
11. Dr MK Teng and CL Gadoo, n. 1.
12. Ibid.
13. Jagmohan: *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir;* p. 249. After the communal disturbances of July 1931, the British appointed a one-man commission headed by Bertrand Glancy to probe the happenings and look into the grievances of the people and suggest remedial measures.
14. Hari Om, former head of Maharaja Gulab Singh Chair, Jammu University, in *Pioneer*... and *Hum Hindustan Ke-Kashmir Hindustan Ka*, (Muslim Rashtriya Manch, Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi).

10

AN UNEASY TRUCE

Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And if you gaze long enough into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back into you. —*Friedrich Nietzsche*

Formation of Interim Government

Sheikh Abdullah became the Head of the Emergency Government, with the somewhat exalted title of the Chief Emergency Administrator, on October 29, 1947, after Maharaja Hari Singh had left the State. On June 9, 1949, the Maharaja abdicated and vested all his powers in his son, Yuvraj Karan Singh.

The emergency administration constituted by the NC immediately after the accession, to meet the serious situation created by Pakistan's invasion, was dissolved in March, 1948, and replaced by an interim government formed by NC and headed by Sheikh Abdullah. This effectively brought to an end the rule of Dogras, and at the same time, introduced an era of gradual oppression of Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley. The interim government ruled for nearly a decade, mostly by decree and ordinance. It gave precedence to the Muslims in almost every sphere of state, be it governance, politics, economy, administration, education, etc. Balraj Puri, a renowned journalist of Jammu wrote, "The system was so regimented that office

bearers of ruling NC were appointed as government officers and vice versa. The Sheikh dismissed my suggestion that government officers should not hold party office by citing how successfully the system worked in Soviet Union."[1] Joseph Korbel added, "The NC ceased to be a party but became a state within a state. It decided everything; who is going to get elected to what office? Who will get a job? Who will receive the supplies, which it alone distributes?"[2]

In keeping with its preference for socialistic (read communist) reforms, the interim government ensured that Kashmir became the first and the only state in post-independent India to have witnessed the most radical land reforms, reminiscent of a communist state, involving 220,000 acres of cultivable land. There were three categories of land holders; *Jagirdars, Muafidar* and *Mukarari*. *Jagirdars* owned vast stretches of land. *Muafidars* were mostly institutions like mosques and temples which received a part of their land revenue. *Mukararies* received meagre payments from the state itself. In September 1950, the Big Landed Estate Abolition Act introduced sweeping land reforms. The landlord was permitted to retain not more than 20 acres of agricultural land, 1.5 acres for orchard, 1 acre for residential and 0.25 acre for kitchen garden, making a total of 22.75 acres. The overriding condition was that the landlord had to work on the land; otherwise his land would be expropriated. The new owner of the land was required to pay to the government the 'Land Tax' and 'Land Development Cess' and the original owners, who were divested of their holdings, were to be paid compensation at a rate significantly below the market value. All lands which were not under cultivation or not given to a tenant were to be transferred to the government for redistribution, or for collective farming, in the true communist style.

The government redistributed the land but did not receive any tax or development cess from the new owners, as they expressed their inability to pay. On the other hand, the divested owner was

not paid any compensation. Finally, the Constituent Assembly decided on March 26, 1952, to confiscate all landed estates without any compensation. By the end March 1953, 188,775 acres was redistributed among 153,399 tenants. This should have resulted in each of the tenants receiving at an average 1.23 acres of land. However, the end result was entirely different. Many tenants received considerably lesser, as influential politicians of NC and corrupt and well-connected bureaucrats cornered a lion's share of this land. Some, even got more than the maximum permissible limit of 22.75 acres. The undistributed land was turned into collective farms at various places, namely, Gopalpura, Shalteng and Harvan. By April 1953, the Jammu and Kashmir government owned nearly 87,500 acres of land, which was used for dishing out favours and in due course, became a perpetual source of corruption.

The implementation of this Act soon made the government's communal agenda evident. In Jammu, the land reforms were implemented across the board, affecting both Hindus and Muslims equally. However, in Kashmir, the same yardstick was not applied. All Hindus, mostly Kashmiri Pandits, were dispossessed of their land with impunity. Large chunks of the *Mukhrari* and *Muafi* land belonging to the Pandit religious endowments generated enough income to sustain their activities. These were nibbled away by communal Muslim elements, with the active connivance of the local administration. This, despite the fact that the religious endowments had been exempted from such reforms. The NC cadres, with the help of a biased administration, carried out the 'land grab' operation against the Pandits with great fervor, rendering thousands of them landless, overnight. Pandits were pushed from pillar to post in order to seek justice. A number of tribunals set up for this purpose turned out to be a mere eye-wash. Having been denied even a legal remedy, they finally gave up.

In its continued zeal to carry-out radical economic reforms, the government now ordered the nationalisation of industry, communications, transport and all other commercial enterprises. This was done with the ostensible purpose of fulfilling the promise made in the *Naya Kashmir* manifesto of NC. These radical economic reforms were invariably implemented in a partisan manner, ensuring that its victims were always Hindus and its beneficiaries Muslims. On the one hand, the administration went out of its way to protect the property rights of Muslims and on the other, it established such licensing system, which only enabled Muslims to establish industry, organise private transport, indulge in trading and purchase property in commercial enterprises. Marketing agencies were sponsored by the state to ostensibly, eliminate 'middlemen', but in actual fact, these ended up providing all facilities and means to certain influential Muslim entrepreneurs who soon monopolised the trade and commerce in the state. Ironically, by the time the interim government was dissolved in 1953, the much acclaimed socialism, that was meant to be ushered in by these economic reforms, was nowhere to be visible. In its place, a new rich class came into existence, which was anything but socialist in thought and deed. The government also ended up creating a powerful Muslim middle class, which was avowedly communal in its outlook and anti-Indian in its leanings. "The rapid transformation of the whole economic organisation of the state, the interim government accomplished, ostensibly to eliminate exploitation and poverty, led directly to the emergence of the new Muslim middle class, which in the years to come formed the mainstay of the Muslim separatist movement in the State."[3]

Similar measures were taken to remove Hindus from state government services arbitrarily, while at the same time, imposing a virtual embargo on their further recruitment. The same policy was applied to their admission into educational institutions. A limitation was placed on their admission into technical training institutes and

nomination and grant of scholarship. Region-wise quotas were fixed in an arbitrary manner. For example, in Kashmir, where Hindus formed nine per cent of the population, the quotas fixed were in proportion to their population. However, in Jammu region, the yardstick was changed to suit the government's communal agenda. There, though the Muslims formed only a small percentage of the population, the quotas were fixed on the basis of educational backwardness and economic status. To make matters worse, in Ladakh, the Buddhists were completely excluded from all reservations, thus depriving them of any quota in educational institutions. It was such communal policies which were responsible for the growth of separatist mentality and Muslim fundamentalism in the state.

Sheikh Abdullah's hypocrisy and his communal agenda were evident from the fact that besides being the head of the interim government, he also headed the *Auqaf Islamia*, the Muslim Endowment Trust. But at the same time he demanded the dissolution of the *Dharmarth*, the Hindu Endowment Trust, which had been established by Maharaja Ranbir Singh to manage the Hindu places of worship and for providing assistance to the needy.

As far as the Pandits were concerned, their exclusion from the state administration, their economic strangulation and restrictions placed on their admission to various educational institutions, compelled them to abandon the valley gradually in search of livelihood. It is estimated that more than 200,000 Pandits migrated to places outside the state in order to secure their future.

Constituent Assembly of the State

Irrespective of what the UNSC said or did, elections to the state's constituent assembly were announced by Yuvraj Karan Singh through a proclamation on May 1, 1951. This envisaged holding of elections in September/October 1951 on three consecutive days, in

which all adult citizens of the state, over the age of 21 could vote. The elections were to be held for 75 seats; 45 in Kashmir valley and Ladakh and 30 in Jammu. Forty-three of the candidates in Kashmir/Ladakh were elected unopposed, a week before the actual election. The remaining two were made to withdraw from the elections. In Jammu, the election papers of 13 opposition party candidates belonging to Praja Parishad[4] were rejected on the flimsiest of grounds. Therefore, even before the elections were held, the NC had already won 58 seats. Whatever legitimacy was still left of these elections, was further eroded when Praja Parishad, announced the boycott of the elections because of what it termed as the "illegal practices and official interference and wholesale rejection of its candidates." As a result, NC got additional 15 seats.[5] In the end, all 75 seats were won by NC — 73 unopposed and 2 uncontested. Fifty-two of the 75 members were Muslims. These farcical elections played straight into the hands of anti-national elements who questioned the very basis of the ratification of the Instrument of Accession by the Constituent Assembly, whose members were thus elected.

The delimitation of constituencies too was based on distribution of population in a brazenly disproportionate manner. It ensured that Muslim majority valley had a larger number of seats than Jammu province. NC leaders created, perpetrated and guarded the communal character of the political set-up in the state that was based on Muslim precedence as its core characteristic. It was not a propitious beginning for democratic process in the state. If Sheikh Abdullah was responsible for it, Nehru too was complicit. As events subsequently proved, such disregard for democratic norms became an essential feature of Sheikh Abdullah's politics. This was not the first occasion when Nehru allowed the Sheikh to have his way, further boosting his already oversized ego and proclivity to bully. Such capitulation actually set the trend of outright appeasement by central government as a standard reaction to bullying tactics adopted by the state leaders

over the years. Besides, such clear disregard for democratic norms continued to be part of the ruling party's politics in the state in the years to come, except in the assembly elections of 1977, 2002 and 2008. During the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly of the State on October 31, 1951, Sheikh Abdullah declared, "...It is well-known that the NC had gone to the people of the State with a programme of accession to India and this programme of accession had been ratified by every single adult voter of the State."[6]

As mentioned earlier, Sheikh Abdullah had deep political differences with Jinnah. They did not see eye to eye with each other. Sheikh was close to the Congress leaders, as the latter had supported his struggle against the Maharaja. In fact, Nehru particularly, had supported him wholeheartedly. Sheikh Abdullah felt that Muslim League was a party totally dominated by mullahs and feudal elements, who were using Jinnah for attaining their own ends and would abandon him once those ends were achieved. As a result, he had, at a crucial time, thrown his lot with India. But post-accession, he developed second thoughts. Many people feel that he allowed himself to be manipulated and, in fact, became a pawn in the hands of big powers that had their own geo-political interests to safeguard in the emerging world order, now being increasingly influenced by the cold war that had already set in. "Abdullah openly began to flirt with ambivalence. While he had little sympathy for Pakistan, he began to warm up to the idea of independence, an option promoted by America without the camouflage of subtlety."[7] Dr S Gopal writes "Some Indian leaders believed that it was Mrs Loy Henderson, wife of the United State's Ambassador, and CIA agent, who encouraged Abdullah to think in these terms."[8]

British and US intelligence agencies played on his hidden desire to see himself as the unquestioned ruler of Kashmir. They perhaps, were able to convince him that they would be able to make him one in the form of a King, an Amir, a Sheikh, a President, etc., as they

had successfully done in many countries of Arabia, North Africa, West Asia and Africa, after the break-up of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I. Sheikh Abdullah may have also felt that Jammu region would always remain out of his political grasp, as its polity had been adversely affected by the communal holocaust that took place in Calcutta as a consequence of the call for 'Direct Action' issued by Muslim League on August 16, 1946. It is also possible that he foresaw his position as one of the many chief ministers in India, rather than a leader of equal standing with Nehru; a status that he always sought for himself.

Be it as it may, as time passed, Sheikh Abdullah's belligerence continued to grow, and he became vehemently anti-Indian. His rhetoric became poisonous and he started delivering fiery speeches that undermined the very accession of the State to the Indian Union. It may be mentioned that he alone did not nurture such an ambition, as Dr MK Teng writes, "Influential section of the leaders and cadres of the NC also favoured a reconsideration of the commitment of the NC to the unity of India, independent of the Indian constitutional organisation. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and other NC leaders claimed that they had been assured that Jammu and Kashmir would not be integrated in the constitutional organisaion of India and that such assurances were incorporated in the Instrument of Accession. They stressed that they had agreed to accede to India on the specific condition that the Muslim identity of the state would form the basis of its political organisation.

The Indian leaders, overwhelmed by their own sense of self-righteousness, helped overtly and covertly in the falsification of the history of the integration of the princely states with India and the accession of Jammu and Kashmir with the Indian Dominion in 1947. Many of them went as far as to link the unity of India with the reassertion of the sub-national identity of Jammu and Kashmir, which the Muslim demand for freedom for a separate Muslim state symbolised. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah who headed

the Interim Government instituted in March 1948, disclaimed the Instrument of Accession executed by Hari Singh, as merely the '*Kagzi Ilhaq*' or 'Paper Accession' and claimed that the 'real accession of the State to India' would be accomplished by the people of the state, more precisely, the Muslim majority of the state. In his inaugural address to the Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly convened in 1951, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who was the Prime Minister of the Interim Government, claimed that the Constituent Assembly was vested with the plenary powers, drawn from the people of the state and independent of the Constitution of India. He claimed that the Constituent Assembly was vested with the powers to opt out of India and assume independence or join the Muslim state of Pakistan. There is no doubt that Sheikh was only indulging in falsehood to put pressure on the Indian leadership.

The fact of the matter is that the lapse of the paramountcy did not underline the independence of the states nor did it envisage the reversion of any plenary powers to the princes or the people of the states. The States were not independent when they were integrated in the British Empire in India. They did not acquire independence when they were liberated from the British Empire in 1947. They were not vested with any inherent powers to claim independence to which Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah referred to in his inaugural address to the Constituent Assembly."

Elaborating on the argument further, Dr Teng says, "The convocation of the Constituent Assemblies in the states was provided for in the stipulations of the Instrument of Accession, which the princely states acceding to India had executed. The Instrument of Accession devised by the States Department of Pakistan for the accession of the states to that country, did not envisage provisions pertaining to the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. The power to convene separate Constituent Assemblies was reserved for all the major states or the union of the states, which acceded to India. The Jammu and Kashmir State was no exception. In fact,

Constituent Assemblies were convened in the states of Cochin and Mysore and the state union of Saurashtra, shortly after their accession to the Indian Dominion. The Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir was a creation of the Instrument of Accession. It exercised powers which were drawn from the State of India and its sovereign authority. It did not possess any powers to revoke the accession of the state to India, or bring about the accession of the state to Pakistan or opt for its independence, as Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah in his inaugural address to the Constituent Assembly claimed. The truth of what happened during those fateful days of October 1947, when the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India was accomplished, was concealed by a irredentist campaign of disinformation which was launched to cover the acts of cowardice and betrayal, subterfuge and surrender, which went into the making of the Kashmir dispute. And such campaign took place both at the state level, as also in Delhi."

Talking about the right of self-determination of the people of the state and the irrelevance of the very idea itself, Dr Teng writes, "The Indian Independence Act, an Act of the British Parliament, which laid down the procedure for the transfer of power in India, did not recognise the right of self-determination of either the people of the British India or the people of the states. The transfer of power was based on an agreement among the Congress, the Muslim League and the British. The British and the Muslim League stubbornly refused to recognise the right of the people of British India and right of the people of the princely states to determine the future of British India or the Indian states. The Muslim League and British insisted upon the lapse of the Paramountcy and its reversion to the rulers of the states. Accession of the states was not subject to any conditions and the Instrument of Accession underlined an irreversible process that the British provided for the dissolution of its empire in India."

Dr Teng further asserts, "No assurance was given to the NC leaders that the Constituent Assembly of the state would be vested with plenary powers or powers to ratify the accession of the State to India, revoke it, opt for its independence or its accession to Pakistan. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and the other NC leaders did not seek the exclusion of the state from the Indian political organisation as a condition for the accession of the state to India. Nor did the Indian leaders give any assurance to them that Jammu and Kashmir would be reconstituted into an independent political organisation, which would represent its Muslim identity."[9]

Dismissal of the Interim Government

Sheikh Abdullah's intransigence and doublespeak created a dangerous situation in the sensitive border state, which even his best friend, Nehru, could not ignore. His movement against the Maharaja, which he had always presented as an anti-feudal upsurge of oppressed Kashmiris, appealed to socialist-minded Nehru and other Congress leaders, who in turn gave him and his movement unstinted support, much to the chagrin of the Maharaja. Nehru, influenced as he was with the 1917 communist revolution of Russia and his antipathy towards the Maharaja, failed to see through Abdullah's communal agenda. But once the Maharaja was gone, Sheikh had to increasingly rouse the Islamic fervor of Kashmiri Muslims to suit his new mindset that preferred independence. This strengthened the foundations of present communal politics in the valley, the first signs of which had become visible during the July 1931, anti-Maharaja stir, whose victims were Kashmiri Pandits for no fault of theirs.

Sheikh Abdullah's communal rhetoric, which became shriller by the day, could not be ignored. Reports about his dropping broad hints about Kashmir's independent status to Norman Dixon, the UN representative, added to the mutual suspicion between the two leaders. Abdullah's communication to Nehru dated July 10, 1950,

further aggravated the situation. In this letter, Abdullah criticised Nehru for advising him on issues other than defence, communication and external affairs. By now, it was apparent that either Abdullah did not consider India secular enough, which led to his change of heart, or Nehru increasingly felt that Abdullah was not as Indian as he had considered him to be all along.

Abdullah, in his speech on April 10, 1952, at Ranbirsinghpura, ridiculed the idea of Kashmir's full accession with India by stating that such thought was "unrealistic, childish and savoring of lunacy". Nehru's letter to Maulana Azad dated March 1, 1953, clearly establishes the degree of apprehension in Nehru's mind about the Sheikh. He wrote, "My fear is that Sheikh Sahib, in his present frame of mind, is likely to do something or take some step, which might make things worse."

Delhi Agreement signed in July 1952, had formalised certain legal and constitutional measures to smoothen the working arrangements between Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir, in the political as well as administrative areas. The agreement signed between the representatives of the State and the Union provided for:

1. The abolition of the hereditary ruler-ship.
2. Vesting of the residuary and concurrent powers in the state.
3. Continuation of the special citizenship rights for the state subjects, while at the same time conferring Indian citizenship on all persons domiciled in Jammu and Kashmir.
4. Flying of separate flag for the state with the National flag also finding a 'supremely distinct place'.
5. The powers to grant reprieve and commute death sentences, etc., to remain with the President of India.
6. The Head of the State, or *Sadr-e-Riyasat,* shall be recognised

by the President on the recommendations of the State Legislature.

7. Detailed and objective examination of the financial arrangement between the State and the Union needs to be carried out before the provisions are formalised.

8. The Centre would have full authority as far as defence of the State against external aggression is concerned, but as far as internal disturbances are concerned, such powers can only be applied with the concurrence of the State Legislature.

9. Application of the Article 324 (elections to the Parliament) of the Constitution of India to the state would be restricted to the elections to the Parliament, President and Prime Minister.

Many provisions of the agreement attracted severe criticism within and outside the Parliament. The critics pointed out that the state needed to be integrated with the rest of the country like any other state, but the agreement only served to increase and perpetuate the gulf dividing the two. They were also concerned with the fate of Hindus in both Jammu and the Valley. They were also not happy with the privileged status that Sheikh had carved out for himself, which would expose India to blackmail in future. Nehru, however, pointed out "the necessity of having confidence in Abdullah's friendship towards India and of acting in good faith."[10] But as the events would prove, he was to be disappointed soon.

In Jammu, Praja Parishad leaders were agitated with the provision of separate flag for the state, included in Delhi Agreement. This led to a serious agitation in Jammu region.

To make matters worse, rumours about American support to independent Kashmir started flying thick and fast, after Sheikh Abdullah met Adlai Stevenson (the Democratic opponent of General

Eisenhower in the US Presidential elections and later its ambassador to the UN). The two met a number of times between May 1 and 3, 1953, with the specific purpose of discussing the formation of independent Sheikhdom of Kashmir, which would help US check Chinese advance in Xinjiang and Russian in Afghanistan. Their meetings ended with a seven-hour conversation at which no one else was present.

Earlier too, Indian Government had been aware of a similar meeting between Sheikh Abdullah and Mr Austin, the US ambassador to UN. This happened at Lake Success in January, 1948, when Sheikh Abdullah had gone to the UN as part of India's delegation. Though a member of the official Indian delegation, Abdullah had met Austin secretly on that occasion. Austin later reported to the US Secretary of State, "It is possible that the principal purpose of Abdullah's visit was to make clear to US that there is a third alternative, namely, independence… he made quite a long and impassioned statement on the subject. He said, in effect, that whether Kashmir went to Pakistan or India, the other dominion would be always against a solution... (Kashmir) is a rich country. He did not want his people torn by dissension between Pakistan and India. It would be much better if Kashmir would be independent and would seek American and British aid for development of the country."[11]

Around the same time, the *New York Times* published a map showing Kashmir as an independent country.

In Kashmir, the NC government was accused of corruption and maladministration by a large section of its own workers and leaders. *Al Haque* newspaper, which was banned five months later, wrote in one of its issues, "It appears that human feelings and gentlemanliness are being sacrificed at the altar of barbarity as if law is helpless before these corrupt and barbaric officers. Money is being illegally extracted from the poor in every town and village."[12] Disenchantment with Sheikh Abdullah's strong-arm methods of governance soon set in. As

discontent started to simmer, the Sheikh's popularity, as well as his political base, began to erode fast.

Unable to stem the rot in the state (own creation), Sheikh Abdullah started to think loudly about getting the state out of Indian Union. He went to the extent of extolling the new leadership that had emerged in Pakistan after the death of Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan, his personal enemies. He started denigrating India and conveyed to the Kashmiri Muslims that his woes were not due to misrule or corruption, but due to accession to India. He started telling foreign reporters and even some of Nehru's colleagues that the issue of accession needed to be looked into again. Many in the NC, like Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, GM Sadiq, Maulana Syed and DP Dhar resented Sheikh Abdullah's anti-India stance and addressed many public meetings. His own party workers who opposed his stand and several Congress leaders, came to Srinagar to talk to Sheikh, but in vain.

In his arrogance, the Sheikh went as far as insulting Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, an iconic figure of the independence movement, and the most prominent Muslim leader of the Congress Party, publicly at a gathering at Idgah, in Srinagar. In May 1953, Nehru flew to Kashmir and tried to patch up the differences within the government, without much success. He then invited Sheikh to Delhi to talk things over. But the latter did not oblige. Sometime later, the invitation was again renewed both by phone as well as in writing. Though Sheikh promised to come, but he did not.

In the meantime, Praja Parishad and some other parties which had launched an agitation against Sheikh Abdullah's anti-national utterances heeded to Nehru's appeal and called off their agitation.

Dr Shyama Prasad Mukerjee, founder of Jan Sangh (predecessor of India's main opposition party, the Bharatiya Janata Party) defied

the existence of the permit system, which allowed entry into the state. He was arrested on June 8, 1953. He died at Srinagar, on June 23, 1953, while Nehru was in London. His death at a young age of 51, while in custody, gave rise to the possibility of foul play and deep suspicions about the circumstances of his untimely death. It inflamed the passions in Jammu and in the rest of the country, further sullying Abdullah's secular image.

Throughout June and July 1953, Sheikh Abdullah continued to fulminate against India and play on anti-India sentiments, refusing even to meet the Prime Minister of the country.

To add to this state of distrust, it was increasingly being felt in New Delhi that the Sheikh was not sincerely implementing the provisions of July 1952, Delhi Agreement."Sheikh Abdullah implemented whatever suited him. But when it came to implementing those provisions which made for greater integration of the State with the Union, he resorted to subterfuge of referring them to one committee or the other of the Constituent Assembly. His tactics upset even Nehru, who wrote to Abdullah, "To me it has been a major surprise that settlement arrived at between us should be by-passed or repudiated. That strikes at the root of all confidence. My honour is bound up with my word."[13]

On July 13, 1953, Sheikh Abdullah gave a clear indication of his desire to be independent, when he publically declared, "Kashmir should have the sympathy of both India and Pakistan.... It is not necessary for us to become an appendage of either India or Pakistan." Suspicion about his intentions grew even more when a leading newspaper quoted him to have said, "Though the accession of Kashmir to India is complete in all aspects, it is conditional and temporary in the sense that the people of the state have to ratify it. Therefore it is not final." In the days to come, he continued to question the accession and went back on almost all things he had

said and done. He went as far as to say that Kashmir's prosperity was tied up with Pakistan as its people had cultural relations with West Pakistan and NWFP. He even said that Kashmir's rivers and roads connected it to Pakistan, with its nearest railway station being Rawalpindi, and Karachi being the nearest port. Signs of his desperation were now quite visible. The import of his irresponsible utterances was not lost on his colleagues.

On August 6, 1953, Maulana Syed Masoodi, General Secretary of the NC issued a statement that clearly outlined his demand for an independent state. He said, "The real issue it should be realised is that there are people in India, who are not prepared to see Kashmir maintain its existing position. They are angry that Kashmiris should remain aloof both from India as well as from Pakistan: one should not work oneself up unnecessarily to see this view being expressed. Instead, it should be examined dispassionately. Then only can there be possible, a correct appraisal of the situation in Kashmir. If Kashmiris rose as one man against Pakistan, it was because they saw that country wanted to force them into a situation which they were not prepared to accept. If today demands are made in India which endangers the autonomous position of the state and realising this danger, the people of Kashmir feel inclined towards a third alternative, it is not they who should be blamed for it but those who are the root cause of it."[14] He even advised the Indian people to organise public opinion against the state's merger with India.

The Sheikh's intransigence continued unabated. In early August, 1953, he made a surprising statement that, "Kashmir's initial accession to India was forced on her because of India's refusal to give any help without the state's accession."[15] The CPI (undivided) flayed the Sheikh for playing into the hands of imperialist powers. Several people demanded action against him for his irresponsible statements and sought his removal from power.

Three of his cabinet colleagues, led by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, accused him of despotism, inefficiency and sheer waste of public resources. In a memorandum submitted to the Head of the State, Dr Karan Singh, they said, "You have tended to act in an arbitrary manner that has generated uncertainty, suspense, and doubts in the minds of the people of the state in general and those in Ladakh and Jammu in particular… you have arbitrarily sought to precipitate a rupture in the relationship of the State with India… You have thus strengthened and encouraged the forces of disruption."[16] As a consequence, the Head of the State suggested that an emergency meeting of the cabinet be held. But the Sheikh refused the request.

Two Intelligence Bureau reports that reached Delhi, however, sealed Abdullah's fate. The first, which was discussed in a closed door meeting between Nehru and his Intelligence Bureau chief, stated that Abdullah was preparing to sack his pro-India cabinet colleagues, including the Deputy Prime Minister, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad. The second one was a clear SOS from the Intelligence Bureau officer looking after Kashmir, BN Malik, which stated that Shiekh Abdullah had left for Gulmarg on the morning of August 8, 1953, with the sole objective of secretly meeting a representative of Pakistan. Nehru could not ignore this development coming as it did after many of Sheikh Abdullah's anti-national actions and utterences. Using the powers of *Sadar-e-Riyasat*, Dr Karan Singh, dismissed the government of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad was sworn as the new Prime Minister (the second interim government). The next day, August 9, 1953, Abdullah was put under arrest. Subsequently, he was put under trial in the case known as 'Kashmir Conspiracy Case.'

Sheikh Abdullah's arrest did not cause much resentment in the state, as large sections of its left-leaning workers and leaders had started accusing his government of corruption and

maladministration. Coupled with this, the strong-arm methods of governance caused great deal of disenchantment among the general public. His popularity was already showing signs of waning when he was arrested. Therefore, when Bakshi Ghulam Mohamad replaced him, the latter received total support from two important leaders, GM Sadiq and Mir Qasim, and a sizeable section of NC workers and from people of Ladakh and Jammu regions.

It may sound unbelievable today, but the fact is that while the Muslims, who supported Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad's installation as the head of the interim government, did not come out in his open support, it was left to Kashmiri Pandits to bear that cross. Openly supporting Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad on the streets of Kashmir served as a morale booster for Bakshi to initiate a campaign against the disruptionists and anti-Indian forces. But at the same time, such open defiance of anti-national forces by Pandits earned them the perpetual hostility of some influential sections of NC cadres and other pro-Pakistan elements. This hostility towards Kashmiri Pandits contributed in no small measure to their genocide and final eviction from the valley, some decades later.

On February 6, 1954, members of the Constituent Assembly unanimously ratified the state's accession with India. Bakshi, among other things said, "...Kashmir had irrevocably acceded to India more than six years ago and today we are only fulfilling the formalities of our unbreakable bonds with India."[17] In the same session, the members stated that Delhi Agreement should find appropriate place in the State's Constitution, in order to let the Government of India discharge its responsibilities towards the State. On May 14, 1954, the President of India issued an order under Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, endorsing the relationship as formulated in the Delhi Agreement. As a first step, the custom barrier was removed, resulting in the complete economic integration of the state with the rest of the country. India

agreed to pay ₹ 2,000,000 a year to the state to compensate it for the loss of custom revenue.

After Sheikh Abdulla's dismissal, events moved at a fast pace. The NC government, which was embroiled in controversy and uncertainty, now began to govern; much to the relief of the common man. Bakshi immediately took some important and people-friendly decisions which were well received by the public. Some of these included; partial restoration of free trade, abolishing import duties on salt, raising salaries of government employees, making education free from elementary to college level, abolishing levy on peasants, subsidising food articles and introducing planned development. He also sought and obtained loans and other financial assistance from the Central Government. In December, 1953, the Government of India advanced a loan of 14.49 million dollars to the State Government. Other welfare measures included the provision of scholarships to students to enable them to pursue education; executing many developmental works, like building roads and commissioning irrigation and hydro-electric projects, etc. An engineering college, a medical college, an Ayurvedic/Unani college and industrial training institutes and polytechnics were established in the Valley for the first time. One of the most ambitious projects executed during Bakshi's time was the construction of a new tunnel at Banihal, at an altitude of 2134 m. The older one, located at approximately 4000 m, was prone to getting frequently blocked in inclement weather, resulting in disruption in the free flow of traffic between Jammu and Srinagar (after partition, India's only surface link to Kashmir). Named Jawahar Tunnel, the new tunnel, constructed in 1955, not only reduced the distance between Jammu and Srinagar by nearly 40 km, it was no longer prone to frequent closures. This ensured that Kashmir Valley did not remain cut off from rest of the country for long periods of time, as used to be the case earlier.

These developmental activities resulted in corruption and nepotism; creating many vested interests. Consequently, money played an important role in not only keeping political supporters in good humour, but also winning over Bakshi's opponents as well. This gave rise to many extra-constitutional centres of power. To meet their ever-increasing demand, Bakshi resorted to financial blackmail of the Central Government by telling it that such financial assistance was necessary to keep Kashmiri Muslims away from Sheikh Abdullah's supporters. Officials and politicians worked hand in glove to perpetuate corruption and extend its reach. They consistently propagated that to ensure peace in the valley, it was necessary to overlook and condone these financial and other irregularities.

This situation created a gulf between Bakshi and his leftist supporters, led by GM Sadiq, DP Dhar, Mir Qasim and GL Dogra. These leaders got disillusioned with the rampant corruption and some of Bakshi's supporters who would use high-handed methods against their political opponents. The final break came in October 1957, when these leaders left the party and joined hands to form a new political party called Democratic National Conference (DNC). This new outfit attracted a large number of youth to it. The most positive fallout of the creation of DNC was the birth of a genuine opposition political party, which was pro-India and also non-sectarian in its composition, ideology and goals. The formation and popularity of DNC posed a challenge to Plebiscite Front (PF), whose cadres became eager to join the new outfit to wage a political struggle based on economic issues.

The existence of DNC was short-lived, as some of its top leaders rejoined Bakshi camp on Nehru's advice and insistence. The party was dissolved and its cadres went back to NC. The DNC experiment was path-breaking in the politics of the state. In due course of time, it would have served as a strong pro-India platform for all those Kashmiris who believed in the idea of India as a secular, multi-cultural

democracy. It would have served to wean away Kashmiri youth from the infructuous anti-India political platform that has only brought misery and sufferings to the common people of Kashmir, while at the same time, served to fill-up the coffers of those leaders who have misled them in the name of Pakistan, *Azadi* and autonomy. It would have also served as a safety valve to let out political steam on many issues of concern to people, without letting the vested interests to steer it towards India-bashing. But Nehru's myopic political vision put paid to such experiment, with grave consequences for the future.

Formation of the Plebiscite Front (PF) and its Impact

The disintegration of the NC after the dismissal of the first interim government in 1953, presented Pakistan with a window of opportunity to make its presence felt in Kashmir. It took advantage of the uncertain political situation that resulted as a consequence. The pro-Pakistan elements in Kashmir, which were lying low, started receiving open support from Pakistan. They started demanding the implementation of the UN Resolution and the right of self-determination for Kashmir.

Taking advantage of the situation, Sheikh Abdullah's supporters in the NC, under the leadership of his second-in-command and alter ego, Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, formed the PF in 1954, with Sheikh Abdullah as its acknowledged supreme leader, though technically he was not even its member. Declaring plebiscite as its objective, the PF spread its organisational roots throughout the length and breadth of the valley and created a huge membership for the fledgeling party. It gathered substantial and widespread support among the Muslim masses in the valley. It attracted anyone and everyone who was anti-Indian. This included the pro-Pakistan over ground and underground cadres; Muslim intelligentsia, bureaucracy and the ever burgeoning middle class. It was a well-known fact that the party was financed mostly by Pakistan, though local people also made substantial

contributions. "It is believed that some of its important functionaries received financial help and concessions from even Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad."[18]

Its propaganda machinery worked overtime to spread venom against India. It appealed to the people to boycott the elections. The movement was responsible for fuelling the phenomenal growth of anti-India forces and fomenting a great deal of trouble for India in the valley. It also contributed immensely to the growth of the culture of political dishonesty and corruption. But India could do very little as it had allowed its support base to be eroded by turning a blind eye to the perpetuation of Muslim majoritarianism and had buckled in front of Abdullah's policy of blackmail and intimidation.

To add to this general state of political discontent, Sheikh Abdullah was released from prison in January 1958. Presuming that it was international pressure on India that forced it to release him, he lost no time in launching a scathing attack on the Government of India. What was worse, he spoke in positive terms about Pakistan. His interview (given in Kud) appearing in the Bombay Weekly, *Blitz*, was particularly venomous. While continuing with his tirade against India, he lashed out at Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad for having been "unfaithful." He did not even spare the DNC and its leaders, calling them "Indian agents" and "greater enemies" of Kashmir. The fact is that he had been alarmed by the seemingly popular perception of DNC among the people, particularly among the youth, and that too on non-sectarian issues; a development totally new to the valley. Therefore, his rallying against the DNC was to stifle the emerging voice of pro-India elements, while at the same time, projecting the Plebiscite Front to be the lone voice and platform of Kashmiris. This was one more instance of Sheikh's intolerant attitude towards political dissent. He was re-arrested after sometime and charged with subversion and sedition against the State. However, in keeping with his policy of appeasement, Nehru, in January 1962, persuaded the

state government to withdraw the Kashmir Conspiracy Case, making the way clear for letting Sheikh Abdullah off the hook.

As if this was not enough, the Chinese invasion of 1962 further exposed the hollowness of India's claims to a leadership role in Asia, without the commensurate military and economic strength. Further, it seriously dented Nehru's image and credibility. Seeing India in such a weakened state was a matter of great satisfaction and joy to both Pakistan and the PF, who sensed an opportunity to exploit the situation to achieve their objectives. As a first step, the PF immediately modified its stand to demand that Kashmir issue be settled between India and Pakistan! The party felt that a weakened India would not be able to stand upto Pakistan and would eventually be compelled to let go off Kashmir.

To add to the overall uncertain political situation in the state, Bakshi Ghulam Mohhamad was made to resign from the prime ministership, as part of the Kamraj Plan, despite the fact that this plan was applicable only to Congressmen and Bakshi was not one. Nevertheless, Nehru's writ ran and Bakshi had to resign. But the wily Bakshi got one of his lieutenants, Shammasudin, elected as the leader of the NC parliamentary party, much against the wishes of the Congress party. Bakshi, therefore, was well-placed to do backseat driving. Shamasudin, however, lasted only for 99 days, as an event of great magnitude, with far-reaching consequences, that shook the Indian establishment, took place in the valley during his reign.

During Bakshi's rule the process of Islamisation in the state continued unabated, even after a separate constitution was promulgated in 1957. Muslim precedence dominated the political and economic scene. Bakshi continued to head the Muslim Auqaf Trust. The Legislative Assembly was also constituted based on the delimitation carried out to serve the purpose of electing the Constituent Assembly. The heavier weightage for Kashmir Valley, and

consequently for Muslims was thus perpetuated. The administrative reorganization was carried out under the pretext of correcting the so-called imbalances. In the process, the government removed some high-ranking officers on the plea that they favoured the Dogra rulers. But in actual fact, it was a ploy to remove Hindu officers from administration and replace them with loyal party men. It was a purely communal agenda camouflaged by subterfuge.

It may be mentioned that Dogra political elite was far from being Hindu in its composition. It was primarily composed of narrow agrarian middle class, which was equally Muslim. Besides, the state services were dominated by the British, with most administrators owing their origin to Indian Civil Service.[19] Though the members of the Dogra ruling class had a large presence from the dynasty, nearly half its size was made up of Muslims. The non-Kashmiri Muslims subjects of the Dogra rulers formed 45 per cent of its army; the remaining 55 per cent were Hindus. The fact is that Hindus of Kashmir and Jammu had taken up English education much before the State's Muslims had and, therefore, had been employed in State Subordinate Services. But most of them occupied unimportant and ordinary posts with insignificant role in decision-making. "Even under Dogra rule Kashmiri Pandits were not favoured in the matters of recruitment to government service,"[20] writes India's former Foreign Secretary, MK Rasgotra.

The partial application of the Constitution of India in 1954, and the promulgation of the Constitution of the State in 1957, were both used to perpetuate the Islamisation of various sectors of governance. Many exceptions and reservations were placed on the application of fundamental rights envisaged by the Constitution of India, which became effective by virtue of the Presidential Order of May, 1954. Thus, arming itself with arbitrary powers, the state government ruthlessly put into effect the reservations for some sections of the people in order to promote Muslim interests.

This blatant communalisation of state policies had a far-reaching effect on the politics of the state in the years to come. With delimitation of the constituencies and permanently depriving the refugee population of any voting rights, the NC government ensured a heavier weightage to the Valley in the Legislative Assembly. During the delimitation of constituencies done before the holding of elections to the State Constituent Assembly in 1951, gerrymandering was carefully carried out to neutralise the non-Muslim vote in at least three constituencies, namely, Habbakadal, Baramulla and Anantnag in Kashmir Valley, and another three constituencies in Doda and Udhampur districts of Jammu region. This process resulted in Kashmir having no constituency which was not a Muslim majority seat, from where the Hindus could elect a representative of their choice. As a result, the Hindus and Sikh representatives elected to the State Assembly from Kashmir did not represent the aspirations of their own respective communities. Most of those who got elected proved to be men of straw, who did the bidding of the majority community. This was apparent during debate on various bills in the Legislative Assembly, particularly on the 'Resettlement Bill,' introduced by NC, headed by Sheikh Abdullah.

Over the years, the heavy weightage given to Kashmir Valley has also ensured that it is a Kashmiri Muslim who has always been the chief minister of the state, irrespective of which party formed the government. "Council of Ministers is also packed with Muslims, with Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists having a representation of roughly 26 per cent."[21] Kashmiri Pandit politicians have occupied no significant position worthy of name, in any political party.

In the government machinery too, "almost all the heads of various departments have been Muslims …an average of less than 26 per cent, including the lent officers of the Government of India and the officers of the Indian Administrative Services, were Hindus. At an average 68 per cent of the higher posts in the State Government

were always monopolised by Muslims."[22] These included major public sector enterprises, educational institutes, colleges, technical institutes, state corporations, etc. "Despite having an average literacy level of 88 per cent, Kashmiri Hindus occupied a dismal 4.8 per cent of the State Services, including those in the public sector enterprises, corporations and government undertakings."[23] In the Central government services, including Jammu and Kashmir Bank, Central government undertakings, the defence services, the Beacon organisation of the Border Roads, and the communication system of the Central government, "the Kashmiri Hindu share was only 12 per cent of the available employment, against 38 per cent of the Kashmiri Muslims."[24]

During the ten-year period (1980–1990), when radical extremism incubated in the Valley, "the recruitment of Kashmiri Hindus in the State Services and services in other corporate bodies was reduced to an average of 1.7 per cent."[25] Even though many communal orders were struck down by higher judiciary, ways and means were found by the state government to bypass these legal hurdles and continue to exclude the Pandits from state employment. Strict embargo was placed to exclude them from teaching staff of higher secondary schools, colleges, and post-graduate departments of Kashmir University, Agricultural University, medical and engineering colleges and Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences, despite being eminently qualified to hold these appointments.

Almost the same policy was adopted for the admission of Kashmiri Pandit students to various professional colleges and technical institutes. "Generally, the Pandit admissions have been in the range of eight per cent of the yearly admissions. Even when looked at from purely population proportion angle, Kashmiri Pandits formed more than eight per cent of the population. Out of this minuscule share of eight per cent, only two per cent were nominated for higher studies or provided grants to study outside

the state. The comparison becomes even more stark when you note that on an average seven per cent of the Kashmiri Pandits were admitted to technical institutes, even though 63 per cent of the applicants among them possessed 60 per cent and above marks, whereas 76 per cent of the Muslim candidates got admission, though only 31 per cent had secured 60 per cent and above marks. In the Technical Training Institutes, 12 per cent Hindus got admission, though 66 per cent applicants possessed first class with 60 per cent or more marks in the qualifying examination, whereas 82 per cent Muslims were admitted in technical training colleges, though only 28 per cent of them had 60 per cent marks or above. In admission to the post-graduate institutes, 14 per cent Hindus were admitted, though 41 per cent of applicants had first class, with 60 per cent or more marks, whereas 78 per cent of the Muslim candidates were admitted to the same classes, though only 14 per cent of them possessed first class with 60 per cent or above."[26] This forced the Pandit students to migrate outside the state in droves.

The monopolisation of the media by the Muslims of the state has also ensured that their viewpoint always received prominence. "Seventy-two per cent of the daily newspapers, news journals, weekly news magazines, and other periodicals were owned by Kashmiri Muslims. In contrast, Hindus owned four newspapers, news magazines and journals."[27] One of these was in English, not published regularly, and had little effect on the public opinion. Besides, Muslim-owned media received widespread state patronage and financial backing from within and without.

The vernacular newspapers, owned as these were by Muslims, carried out persistent communal and separatist propaganda, advocating secession, losing no opportunity to denigrate Hindus and India. Most newspapers advocated the application of *Nizam-e-Mustaffa*. Many newspapers openly instigated the Muslim

masses against the Kashmiri Pandits, whom they projected as the instruments of their own perceived enslavement. As for Kashmir history, they refused to own it, since it was not theirs anyway. The past did not concern them and they were disinterested in it.

Indian political leaders, by and large, ignored the rising consolidation of anti-Indian forces in the state, for reasons that are not too difficult to discern. To start with, Nehru had put all his eggs in one basket; that of NC in general and Sheikh Abdullah in particular. Therefore, when Sheikh showed his true colours, India had nowhere to look. As far as the leftists (who exercised enormous influence, far in excess of their numbers) were concerned, they rationalised the Muslim precedence by equating it with the resurgence of the oppressed masses. On numerous occasions, Sheikh Abdullah exploited this communist sentiment to the hilt.

The *Mo-e-Muqadas* (the Sacred Relic) Agitation

The decade of sixties proved most fruitful for the anti-Indian forces in the state. The secessionist forces which had been emboldened by the humiliating loss India suffered at the hands of Chinese in 1962, got a further fillip during the massive and prolonged agitation that rocked the valley in the winter of 1963. This event proved to be watershed in the post-accession history of Kashmir; such was its fallout. In December 1963, sacred relic of Prophet Mohammad (called *Mo-e-Muqadas*; meaning sacred hair), kept in Hazratbal Shrine, and displayed every Friday after the prayers, went missing from its sanctum sanctorum. The theft triggered gigantic upheaval in the valley, with lakhs pouring into the streets of major and minor towns of Kashmir to register their protest. This unprecedented turmoil literally brought life to a standstill. Their demands basically included the restoration of the relic and naming the real culprit (*Asli mulzim ko pesh karo*). People's anger turned towards Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad whom the agitating people considered the real culprit.

As the agitation took place in the extreme cold of winter; the agitators used kangris[28] as effective missiles against the law enforcement agencies.

The hurt religious sentiment that resulted from the theft, coupled with anti-India sentiment, inflamed passions as never before. Shamasudin, the Prime Minister, who was largely seen as Bakshi's proxy, became its first casualty as he was swept off power. Nevertheless, while these political developments were taking place, the relic continued to remain untraceable. During this period, there was absolutely no let up in either the number of people joining the protests every day, or in the intensity of their anger. Kashmir was literally hanging by the thread. Finally, the relic was traced and restored to its sanctum sanctorum after its genuineness had been authenticated by a widely respected Muslim cleric, Mirakh Shah. But for the deft handling by Lal Bahadur Shastri and the wise counsel provided by two Kashmiri leaders, Maulana Syed Masoodi and the veteran politician, GM Karra, Kashmir was on the edge and very close to witnessing a holocaust. Though the restoration of the relic saw the end of street protests and apparent return to normalcy, the whole episode left deep scars on the political situation of the state and had far-reaching consequences on its future politics.

The prolonged agitation led to the rejuvenation of anti-national forces, besides irreversibly communalising the polity further. Pakistan's proxies in the state worked overtime to exploit the mass upsurge and channelise people's anger against India. They succeeded to a great extent in doing so. These elements got a fresh lease of life and were so emboldened that most of them now came over ground. They now set to work to destroy the last vestiges of India's influence in the state. Indian Government's reaction was on the expected lines; it chose to compromise with the anti-national forces. As a consequence, Sheikh Abdullah was released from prison and Nehru initiated a dialogue with him. At that time, reports started

appearing that Nehru was prepared for a compromise, according to which Kashmir would become a Muslim autonomous entity within India. It was further reported that Nehru had even made such an offer to the leaders of the PF. This would have entailed withdrawing all provisions of the Constitution that had been extended to it after 1953. It is believed that Nehru was even prepared for this.

However, Sheikh Abdullah insisted that Pakistan be made a party to the dispute. It was in these circumstances that Nehru died on May 27, 1964.

In the meantime GM Sadiq, who now took over the reins of power, promised liberalisation of the political discourse in order to win over even those representing the anti-national sentiment. According to this policy, no one, not even those belonging to the Plebiscite Front, were to be treated as untouchables. In fact, most of them were provided with largesse. Some degree of acceptable and transparent basis for admission to professional colleges was also devised. Seventy per cent of the seats were reserved for the majority community and 30 per cent for non-Muslims. This had a positive impact on the overall situation, and to some extent, the rhetoric of the anti-Indian forces was blunted. Efforts were made to provide youth with jobs and other avenues of self-employment.

At the same time, Sadiq took a number of steps to bring the state into the national mainstream. Some of these measures included; change in the nomenclature of the head of the state from *Sadr-e-Riyasat* to governor and from prime minister to chief minister. Besides, the governor was now to be appointed by the President of India, instead of being elected by the State Legislature. The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of India was extended to the state and several sections of the Constitution of India were made applicable to the state. Though these measures helped strengthen political integration, the emotional integration remained a distant dream.

Similarly, even though political liberalisation had a positive impact on the general atmosphere, it had an unwelcome flip side too. A large number of anti-national elements who had been compelled to go underground earlier, surfaced in large numbers. They now had a field day and exploited the liberty of working over ground by inflaming anti-Indian sentiment. Demonstrations and agitations with anti-Indian slant grew in intensity and scale and became the order of the day. For the first time slogans like, 'Indian dogs go back' were heard. Much against the promise of creating a liberalised political atmosphere, Sadiq too resorted to the old stratagem of getting the election papers of his opponents rejected and having his own partymen elected unopposed. As a result, the political situation in the state deteriorated. The PF cadres were now joined by another virulently anti-Indian organisation, called the Awami Action Committee; a party formed in the backdrop of the theft of *Mo-e-Muqadas*, to coordinate the agitation. Many youth organisations and students bodies which had been formed in the valley under the direct patronage of Pakistan during this agitation lent their wholehearted support to these anti-Indian protests.

In the meantime, in February 1965, Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg, went on a pilgrimage to Mecca for performing Haj. During their sojourn abroad, they toured many places, including Europe and Algeria, facilitated by the diplomatic corps of Pakistan. In Algeria they met the Chinese Prime Minister, Chou en Lai. This meeting, coming so close to the Chinese aggression of 1962, raised hackles in India. Their passports were impounded and both of them were arrested on their return to India. The Valley, consequently, erupted into protests and agitations again. These protests were more communal and intensely anti-Indian in nature. Pakistan exploited the situation to the hilt, as it saw a new opportunity to fish in Kashmir's troubled waters.

The Two Wars and their Impact

The first half of the decade of sixties saw a decline in India's stature and prestige. A humiliating defeat at the hands of China, Nehru's loss of standing as a consequence, brought down India's profile at the international level. Conditions of strife in the country created due to the loss of the holy relic in Kashmir and its accompanying turmoil in the valley, language riots in Madras State (now Tamil Nadu), besides a *Thousand Mutines* throughout the length and breadth of India created *A Siege Within.* Nehru's death at this crucial juncture only made matters worse. Around the same time, Pakistan was getting strengthened by receiving enormous economic and military assistance as a member of the anti-communist US alliances, CENTO and SEATO. This emboldened Pakistan in its approach to India. Convinced that Chinese aggression and Nehru's death had weakened India as never before, Pakistan saw an opportunity that it was looking for, to make another bid at grabbing Kashmir. The threat of war therefore, loomed large on the horizon.

What was about to happen in Kashmir has been clearly recounted by Duane R Claridge in book, *A Spy for All Seasons: My Life in the CIA*: "In 1964, Nehru released Sheikh Abdullah from prison. Abdullah immediately left for Paris. I flew to see him. He seemed a bit tentative, and nothing much came of the meeting, except for an agreement to meet again, this time in Jidda, Saudi Arabia, during the Hajj"… "Later I flew to Jidda and contacted him. This time Abdullah really had something to say, and it was explosive. During his pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, for the Hajj, and before my arrival in Jidda, Abdullah claimed he had been briefed on Pakistan's next moves in Kashmir, which would result in the first Indo-Pak war, in the fall of 1965"… "The Lion of Kashmir basically gave me the whole plan of the Pakistanis for Kashmir. The Pakistanis were going to begin infiltrating small guerrilla units out of 'Azad Kashmir' into Kashmir proper. Those units would then begin to stir up things.

Once the insurrection got underway in Kashmir, regular Pakistani military forces would come to Kashmir's aid."

The success of their strategy depended upon the expected uprising of Kashmiris against India at a crucial moment, to coincide with the arrival of infiltrators that Pakistan was to push into the valley, in the first phase of the operation called, 'Operation Gibraltar'. This uprising was planned to be synchronous with the Pakistan's armoured thrust into Chhamb-Jaurian Sector, that would cut off the valley from rest of the country, at the most crucial stage in the second phase of the overall operation.

1965 War

The infiltrators did succeed in getting into the valley in large numbers, as Indian intelligence agencies did not, as usual, get the wind of it. Armoured thrust too succeeded, with the vanguard of Pakistan's 1st Armoured Division, which spearheaded this thrust, reaching as far as the vital Akhnoor Bridge over River Chenab. But that was about all. Thereafter, Pakistan only witnessed reverses. The anticipated mass uprising did not occur, and the armoured thrust petered out as India launched a counter-thrust in Lahore-Sialkot sectors. The war ended inconclusively, with both sides claiming victory. However, India had a decisive edge, though it had been caught totally unawares and unprepared. Whereas India registered territorial gains of nearly 1,800 sq km, Pakistan held about 550 sq km of Indian territory.

In Pakistan, this war is regarded as something of a milestone. It has consistently propagated to its own people that Pakistan had achieved a great victory over India. But the truth is entirely different. Altaf Gauhar, who was Pakistan's Secretary of Information and Broadcasting at the time of this conflict and worked closely with the Pakistani Military Dictator, General Ayub Khan, put Pakistan's

performance in proper perspective. He says, "Ayub Khan may have a lot to answer for, for authorising Kashmir operations, but in agreeing to ceasefire, he acted with... realism... patriotism... though he had to pay a terrible price in personal terms."[29]

The territories captured by both the countries were eventually vacated as a result of the Tashkent Agreement. India had to vacate the most strategically located Haji Pir Pass that dominated the Uri-Poonch bulge, captured by Indian troops during the war. This Pass was put to great use by Pakistan in pumping in infiltrators into Jammu and Kashmir, two decades later. The agreement, midwifed by the Soviet Union to bring about reconciliation between the two belligerents, virtually brought to an end the UN mediation in Kashmir.

The PF, which had insisted on Pakistan playing a decisive role in solving the dispute, now, insisted that Kashmiris will have to be a party to the final settlement of the issue, even if India and Pakistan were to reach any accord. As mentioned earlier, after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest in 1953 and his long absence from the state during such incarceration, certain provisions of the Indian Constitution had been extended to the state. These measures had been taken for purely practical considerations of governance and also in the interests of the common citizens of the state. However, the vested interests and separatists used these measures to emotionally blackmail Kashmiri Muslims whenever it suited them. They instigated the masses to launch violent and prolonged agitations by propagating that extension of above mentioned provisions of Indian constitution to the state, had resulted in the erosion of the essence of Article 370. Pakistan's so-called 'victory' in the 1965 war and the sustained propaganda by PF over the years, created a generation of militant Muslim youth, for whom freeing the 'subjugated Muslims of Kashmir from the clutches of Hindus of India,' became an ideological imperative and a

rallying cry. Their ideology was based on the following four essential ingredients:-

- That NC did not represent the will of the people when they acceded to India.
- It was only the use of force that would compel India to withdraw from Kashmir.
- They felt that the PF, with its way of politics, would not be able achieve this objective.
- Kashmir being a Muslim majority state was a natural part of Pakistan, which had been created exclusively for the Muslims of south Asia.

1971 War

In Indira Gandhi's chequered career, 1971 war against Pakistan was, perhaps, her finest hour. Her entire diplomatic and military strategy prior to and during the war was a masterstroke of a seasoned statesman. Among the serious obstacles she faced in her determination to end Pakistani military atrocities on Bengalis in their own eastern wing of the country, none were as formidable as the hostility she faced from US President, Richard Nixon and his redoubtable Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger. Both hated her and were strongly allied with Pakistan. MV Kamath,[30] being posted in Washington those days had a ringside view of their relationship. He recalls, "The United States under President Richard Nixon was strongly on the side of Pakistan. Nixon hated India with the intensity of a burning sun. His unprincipled Secretary of State was ever-willing to back his boss to the hilt. If Nixon showed anger against India, Kissinger would happily fan it. If Nixon abused India, Kissinger was willing to go all the way to insult it… The plane in which she (Mrs Gandhi) travelled (to the US) was ordered to come to halt at New York's Kennedy

Airport close to a stinking urinal, deliberately. One had to hold one's nose while passing by. According to the lowest level of protocol, she was received by a junior State Department official. I was one of those present on the occasion… The first meeting between her and Nixon was fixed. Punctual to the point, Mrs Gandhi presented herself, but Nixon deliberately made her wait for some 40 minutes to show his contempt for his visitor..."

China too was a firm ally of Pakistan. Nevertheless, Mrs Gandhi neutralised both with the deftness of an accomplished strategist by signing the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation with USSR. She gave specific instructions to her Army Chief, General SHFJ Manekshaw (later Field Marshal) to liberate Bangladesh in a lightning strike within the shortest possible time that would give America practically no time to react. According to her thinking, it would present the separated eastern wing of Pakistan as a fait accompli to the rest of the world. During the war, Henry Kissinger did suggest to Huang Hua, China's representative at the UN to open another front against India in order to draw off pressure from their common ally. The US further assured China that its own Seventh Fleet would be readily available in the backwaters of Bay of Bengal to lend whatever assistance was required by China. But with Soviet troops massed on its border, China balked and the rest, as the cliche goes, is history. As Patrice Tyler writes, "The episode was a humiliation for Nixon and Kissinger… Nixon and Kissinger were left like brides at the altar waiting for China to act. When ceasefire took effect, West Pakistan's Army limped back home. East Pakistan emerged as an independent Bangladesh. India's hegemony in South Asia significantly enhanced,"[31]

In the meanwhile, in Kashmir, Sadiq passed away a couple of days before India achieved a resounding victory over Pakistan, which resulted in its break up, and emergence of Bangladesh. Syed

Mir Qasim now became the Chief Minister. His tenure saw the growth of rabid communal and fundamentalist forces, which were provided with overt and covert assistance by those in power. The extent of their growth can be gauged from the fact that a communal party like JeI won five seats in the state assembly. This gave a fillip to the demand for plebiscite, which grew louder and more frequent. However, Pakistan's defeat at the hands of its arch enemy, India, dealt a severe blow to the secessionist forces in the valley. Sheikh Abdullah's release from jail thereafter, led to a further positive development, which saw the dissolution of PF in 1975. During the last stages of Mir Qasim's tenure, the political situation took an interesting turn, when Sheikh Abdullah was elected as the leader of the Congress Legislature Party. However, he had neither forgotten the past nor forgiven his detractors. He assessed correctly, "that being in power, he could create difficulties for the Centre. And this he did, in right earnest."[32] His first act was to induce defections in the Congress party by luring some of its Muslim legislators to his side. Next, he cut off the subsidy given by the Centre on food rations, asking people to tighten their belts and thus free themselves from the condescending and patronising attitude of New Delhi. He also reverted to his old game of speaking with two voices; criticising India in front of his Kashmiri audiences and being his sweet reasonable self while speaking to Indian newsmen or addressing Jammu audiences. No wonder, Pandit Prem Nath Dogra, a respected leader from Jammu, said of Sheikh Abdullah, that he was, "A communalist in Kashmir, a communist in Jammu, and a nationalist in India."[33]

As late as 1968, Sheikh Abdullah reiterated his position concerning accession to India. In an interview to *Organiser,* he said, "We of the NC preferred India to Pakistan because we had a progressive socio-economic programme which we could implement only in the more liberal air of India."[34] In the positive political environment created by the events described above, both India and

Sheikh Abdullah thought it prudent to start negotiations, which would examine afresh the relevance and legal basis of the applicability of all provisions of the Indian constitution extended to the state after the accession in 1947, keeping in mind its special status derived from Article 370.

Consequently, in 1972, negotiations were started with Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg to examine all the provisions. During several rounds of talks over prolonged period of time, each such provision was critically examined, but not a single provision was found objectionable. In fact, the Sheikh Abdullah Government could not formulate even one proposal for withdrawal of any such provision. It is obvious that such critical examination would have revealed to the representatives of the State that each one of those provisions (extended to the state after 1947) was essential for the welfare and development of the people of the state. In fact, it must have also become obvious to the negotiators that without such provisions, the state would suffer a great deal. For example, without financial integration with the Union, the state would have no resources for development, because the entire funds for five-year plans and substantial part of non-plan expenditure, are provided by the Union. Similarly, in the absence of Article 356 (dealing with the imposition of President's rule), what legal recourse is available to the Union if the state refuses to comply with any directions concerning defence, communications or foreign affairs? The fact of the matter is that irrespective of the lies perpetuated by vested interests about the erosion of the essence of Article 370, these negotiations established that the larger interests of the people of the state were inextricably tied-up with full integration of the State with the Union.

These discussions finally led to Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Abdullah signing the Kashmir Accord in February, 1975. As a result, Mir Qasim, the incumbent Chief Minister, stepped down and power was handed over to the Sheikh without affecting any change in the composition of the State Legislature, in which Congress enjoyed

majority. It may be recalled that prior to this, Sheikh Abdullah had spurned all efforts at reconciliation. But now the whole political environment had undergone a qualitative change. His arch foes, Bakshi and Sadiq, were dead and more importantly, with Pakistan's defeat in the 1971 war, and the emergence of Bangladesh, he was left with no alternative but to come to terms with reality and accept the accord that best suited the interests of the state, and perhaps, his own interests.

While all these developments concerning Kashmir were taking place, the political situation in the rest of the country was coming to a boil. The decade of eighties was one of unremitting strife for the country. It faced unprecedented challenges to its integrity. Its army was stretched to the limit fighting both internal and external threats; from Siachen in the north to Sri Lanka in the south, from the Seven Sisters[35] in the north-east to Punjab in west.

Indra Gandhi had imposed a nation-wide emergency consequent to Allahbad High Court upholding the petition filed by her political opponent, Raj Narain, pleading for declaring her election to the Lok Sabha null and void. The general election of 1977, which was held after the emergency had been lifted, brought Janata Party to power. In the 1977 State Assembly elections, Sheikh Abdullah "refused to come to an electoral understanding with the Janata Party, as that would compromise his anti-India posture that he wanted to exploit during the electioneering. Some of the issues that he raised during the campaigning included; the opening the Jhelum Valley Road, withdrawal of Indian Army from Kashmir and defeating "political parties of India."[36] He revived the old *Sher-Bakra*[37] feud to further gain political mileage. A colleague of his would ask for vote with a piece of rock-salt[38] in his hand. After winning the elections, Janata Party supporters were given a rough time by NC workers: *Bakras* had to flee their homes and seek shelter in safer places to escape the wrath of the furious *Shers*. As for Congress supporters, the choicest epithets were hurled at them.

During the second phase of the Sheikh's rule (1977–1982), obscurantist forces got a boost and the administration was Islamised with renewed vigour. Friday prayers were offered in offices, cinema shows on Fridays were cancelled during the day for *Namaz* (prayers). Every conscious effort was made to undermine the authority of the Indian Union. Income tax officials who came to inquire into income and tax evasion by some politically well-connected big business houses in Kashmir, were not only denied police assistance, but were also physically manhandled by violent mobs, organised by NC workers. IAS officers from outside the state were given insignificant postings, except a few who did the bidding of the ruling party bigwigs. The JeI schools were not taken over as Sheikh Abdullah had promised earlier. On the other hand, large funds started pouring in from Pakistan and Arab countries for JeI and Jamat-e-Ahl-e-Hadis and their front organisations.

In March 1980, the JeI played host to a delegation from Medina University. Later, a member of the delegation, Prof Abdul Samad, felt bold enough to say at an open meeting in Srinagar, "For an Islamic revolution we have to prepare the people individually and collectively. To achieve this we have to give sacrifices."[39] The same year in September, Amir of JeI of PoK, Maulana Abdullah paid a visit to Kashmir and publicly proclaimed that Kashmiris were not a party to the Simla Agreement. It is believed that the Maulana had come to brief his counterpart in Kashmir on General Zia's prospective plan to grab Kashmir by launching Operation Topac (see chapter-12 and n. 41). However, this alarmed the Central Government and he was asked to leave Kashmir within twenty-four hours. During the same period, under one pretext or the other, a number of new police battalions were raised. Some of these battalions recruited JeI activists and even persons believed to be from across the LoC.

On the one hand, NC leaders consolidated their hold on the power structure of the state, and on the other, they hobnobbed

with the anti-Indian and secessionist forces. Whenever it suited them politically, the NC leaders would out-do these anti-India elements by indulging in competitive communal politics. This was to prove to Pakistan's proxies in the state that under NC, Kashmir could be more Islamic than Islamic Pakistan itself. Every effort was made by the NC government to weaken the secular and nationalist minded political parties. In this manner, the NC government encouraged and strengthened the communal and secessionist forces, who continued to grow and consolidate their position as months rolled by. Such politics had a disastrous effect on the secular and nationalist forces that found the task of strengthening the bonds between the Union and the State, increasingly difficult.

To prove himself to Kashmiri Muslims, the Sheikh indulged in unabashed appeasement of Islamic sentiment. State and Muslim Auqaf funds were spent on building impressive mosques and religious institutions on government land. A special routine order (SRO) was issued to change the name of hundreds of Kashmir villages so as to obliterate the traces of past history and culture. By this policy, the Sheikh directly or indirectly, helped forces inimical to India and its secular character. His last years in power were spent in leaving no stone unturned in making India look suspect in the eyes of Kashmiri Muslims. He even went to the extent of describing all Kashmir Pandits as Intelligence Bureau agents in his autobiography *Aatsh-e-Chinar*. Forgetting the praise he had lavished on India's liberal, secular and progressive environment, not very long ago, he now castigated Indian secularism and Congress leaders.

As his megalomania was gradually getting the better of him, he had stopped trusting even those who had stood by him through thick and thin, throughout his political journey. He fell out with Mohammad Afzal Beg, his most trusted colleague of long standing. He did not have any confidence even in his son-in-law, GM Shah. So he declared his son, Dr Farooq Abdullah, as his heir and made

him the president of NC. Addressing a public gathering to mark this occasion, he said, "I trust him and request you too to help him in doing the job. Like me, he won't betray your trust. What I have not been able to achieve, he will."[40] This he said despite having himself expressed doubts about Farooq Abdullah's abilities. DD Thakur, a minister in Sheikh Abdullah's cabinet writes that once Farooq Abdullah wanted to accompany DD Thakur during the latter's visit outside the state. Farooq Abdullah requested him to speak to Sheikh Abdullah and seek his permission to permit him (Farooq Abdullah) to accompany DD Thakur on this visit. When DD Thakur broached the issue with Sheikh Abdullah, the latter replied, "I think you are doing a disservice to him. He is not capable of running a small polyclinic, how do you expect him to do well in politics?"[41]

In September 1982, Sheikh Abdullah passed away and Dr Farooq Abdullah was made the chief minister, ignoring the claims of Sheikh Abdullah's senior colleagues and without consulting the party legislators. Everything was done silently and swiftly, with the blessing of Indira Gandhi, as Farooq was close to her son, Rajiv.

Notes

1. Balraj Puri, *The Times of India,* October 19, 2009. Balraj Puri is one of the most renowned journalists of Jammu and Kashmir State.
2. Joseph Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir* (Oxford University Press, 1952) p. 208.
3. Dr MK Teng and CL Gadoo, *White Paper on Kashmir* for Joint Human Rights Committee for Minorities in Kashmir, (Jeoffry and Bell Inc. Publishers, Delhi).
4. *Praja Parishad* was a Jammu-based political party with widespread support in Jammu region and opposed to the NC. It believed in complete integration of the State with India, unlike NC, which resisted such integration. It was led by a charismatic leader, Prem Nath Dogra.
5. *The Times,* (London), October 13, 1951.
6. *The Hindu,* (Madras), November 1, 1951.
7. MJ Akbar, *The Siege Within* (Penguin, 1976).
8. Dr S Gopal's Biography of Nehru: while referring to volume 5 of the papers of Adlai Stevenson. (Edited by W. Johnson and Dr S Gopal).
9. Dr MK Teng, *Kashmir Sentinel,* March 2008.
10. Joseph Korbel, n. 2, p. 225.

11. Dr S Gopal, quoted by Claude Arpi in *Pioneer*, August 27, 2008.
12. Joseph Korbel, n. 2, p. 214.
13. Jagmohan, *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*, (Allied Publishers, Delhi, 1991).
14. Dr MK Teng and CL Gadoo, n. 3.
15. *The Hindu Weekly Review* (Madras), August 10, 1953.
16. *The Times of India*, (Bombay), August, 10, 1953.
17. *Indiagrams* (The Embassy of India, Washington, D.C.), No 388, February 9, 1954.
18. *Kashmir; Crises in Perspective* (Indian Research Institute for Kashmir Affairs).
19. Precursor to the Indian Administrative Service of today, Indian Civil Service was an elite service created by the British during their rule in India, to administer this huge and diverse colony of theirs. It was the British Indian Army and the Indian Civil service, through which Britain ruled British India. Initially, entry to the service was open only to the British; later on, it was thrown open to Indians too.
20. *Indian Express*, August 26, 1995.
21. Dr MK Teng and CL Gaddo, n. 3.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. It is a fire pot, or a portable stove, which is typically Kashmiri. It consists of an inner earthen pot, called *Kundal*, placed inside an outer casing consisting of a wicker basket with handles to hold it. To strengthen the basket, a mesh of straight wicker lining is added at the back of the basket. A little wooden or metallic spatula, called *Tsalan*, is tied to the back of the basket to enable turning over of the burning charcoal inside the earthen pot. *Kangri* is held under *Pheran* and carried by a person wherever he or she goes, to provide continuous warmth in winter. In the absence of any other economic source of heating available, Kashmiris have traditionally relied on *Kangri* to provided a portable heating system. The charcoal used in the *Kangri* is made by burning Chinar leaves or *Pohu* wood, as the hot embers are required to yield constant heat. *Keys to Kashmir* says that, "Kashmiris learnt the use of *Kangri* from the Italians in the retinue of the Mughal Emperors."
29. *Kashmir Sentinel*, December 2005.
30. Madhav Vittal Kamath, a well-known Indian journalist, was the former chairman of Prasar Bharati. He worked as the editor of *The Sunday Times* (India) for two years during 1967–69 and as Washington correspondent of *The Times of India* during 1969–78. He has authored nearly 40 books on various topics. He was awarded Padma Bhushan in 2004.
31. Patrik Tyler, *A Great wall, Six Presidents and China: An investigative History* (New York Public Affairs, 1999).
32. SS Toshakhani, BL Koul and ML Raina; *Kashmir: Crises in Perspective* (Indian Research Institutes for Kashmir Affairs, Jain Printing System, New Delhi, 1990).
33. Statement given in Madras, quoted in *The Hindu*, October 15, 1952.

34. Sheikh Abdullah's interview carried by *Organiser* of February 4, 1968.
35. The seven North-eastern states of India which are geographically contiguous and share many things in common are called *Seven Sisters.* These states are; Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram, Meghalaya. For the past many decades, most of these States have been hit by insurgency in vaying degrees.
36. SS Toshakhani, BL Koul and ML Raina, n. 32.
37. Supporters of Mirwaiz, the religious head of Kashmir. This appointment is hereditary. At this point in time, Maulvi Farooq was the Mirwaiz. Supporters of Mirwaiz are historically referred to by their nickname, *Bakras* (meaning goats), whereas supporters of Sheikh Abdullah's NC are called *Sher* (meaning lions). The rivalry goes back to the years of break-up of Muslim Conference, with NC becoming a separate party opposed to Kashmir's accession to Pakistan and the Mirwaiz (at that time Mohammad Yusuf Shah) supporting Jinnah.
38. Rock-salt, like other goods, used to come to Kashmir through Jhelum road, its only link with undivided India and was extensively used in Kashmir before the partition. In the minds of Kashmiri Muslims, rock-salt came to be identified with Pakistan after Kashmir's accession to India.
39. SS Toshakhani, BL Koul and ML Raina, n. 32.
40. Ibid.
41. DD Thakur, *My Life and Years in Kashmir Politics*; (Konark, New Delhi, 2005). p. 247.

11

GATHERING STORM

"To sin by silence when they should protest makes cowards of men."
—Abraham Lincoln

Farooq takes Centre Stage

Farooq Abdullah studied in England where he came into contact with members of Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), including its leader Ammanullah Khan, whom he met in London, in 1971. Ammanullah Khan had reached there after fleeing with his friends from Pakistan, to evade arrest. This relationship grew further till 1973, when "Farooq went to PoK and not only took an oath to 'Liberate' Kashmir in a ceremony organised by JKLF, but himself administered the same oath to other young men assembled there."[1] In a massive reception accorded to Sheikh Abdullah in Srinagar on his return to power in 1975, Farooq Abdullah joined the procession alongwith a number of his JKLF colleagues whom he had brought along from England. In this procession, proudly witnessed by his father, he coined a new slogan, "*Chyon Desh, Myon Desh — Kashur Desh Kashur Desh*" (Your and My Country is Kashmir).

These then were the political leanings and mindset of Farooq Abdullah when he took over the reins of the state administration in September 1982. Farooq was also non-serious, whimsical and

cavalier in his attitude to governance and devoted little time to attending to his onerous tasks as chief minister of this crucial state at a difficult time. Throughout his tenure he allowed these qualities and his mindset to govern his conduct. On assuming the office of the chief minister, with the help of his father's ministerial colleagues, his first action was to denounce the same people in their presence, in a public meeting. He exhorted the people to give him the approval to have a brand new team of 'honest and trustworthy' people to run the state. The people shouted their approval in one voice, fed up as they were with the level of corruption prevailing in the state. To keep the anti-India forces in good humour, he assured the gathering that he would 'never compromise with the dignity and honour of Kashmiris, even if it meant fighting the mighty India.'

Within three months of assuming power, he joined hands with the political parties opposed to Indira Gandhi and took an anti-Centre and anti-Congress stand. Politically, this was a tactical ploy which suited him and made him politically comfortable in the prevailing conditions in Kashmir. He allowed the state to become a sanctuary of Punjab militants who found themselves safe and welcome in the state. During his first tenure, a large number of Sikh youth from the state joined the ranks of militants. Many believed that he allowed these militants to run training centres in Kashmir by providing them with required facilities. This attitude of the administration emboldened the extremists and their over-ground supporters to take out processions and hold demonstrations in the state. When Bindranwale[2] was killed, Farooq Abdullah rushed to Khir Bhawani temple at Tulamulla, where a huge Kashmiri Pandit gathering was observing a festival on *Ashtami*, and advised the people assembled there to rush back to Srinagar as the situation was likely to get out of control as "the Sikhs had lost their Guru." He further warned them that the situation in the state, as also in the rest of the country, was bound to get worse. Having himself assessed the

situation, he failed to take adequate measures to save the Hanuman Mandir and the Nirankari Bhavan and many houses in Jawahar Nagar and Wazir Bagh localities of Srinagar, which were targeted by the agitating Sikhs. The police was sent much after the damage had been done and 15 precious lives were lost. This was his way of getting back at the Congress and the Centre.

To appease and encourage parochial elements in Kashmir, he exhorted students of Kashmir University to preserve their Islamic identity. He patronised those Kashmiri intellectuals who were known for their anti-Congress views, and encouraged them to spread the message of Kashmiri identity among the intellectual class of rest of India. Such a stand showed Farooq Abdullah's typical hypocrisy, as his well-known flamboyant life style was far removed from what Kashmiri culture and ethos represented. He further accused India of fomenting communal riots and stated that Muslims were not safe in India. In his doublespeak, he merely followed his father.

To the Indian media he presented himself as a patriot who was being hounded by Indira Gandhi, unnecessarily; while in Kashmir, he joined hands with an avowed anti-Indian and his political arch rival, Maulana Farooq, in order to foster Muslim unity and brotherhood. He exhorted the youth wing of NC to be prepared for the 'battle of freedom'. His rhetoric reached a feverish pitch as the 1983 elections drew closer. Addressing one of the election meetings he said, "We are fighting the Congress. Its defeat will mean the defeat of the Central power that wants to subjugate Kashmiris." What is even worse, one of Indra Gandhi's public meetings was not only disturbed but she was insulted right in front of the big contingent of local police, when NC workers took off their trousers and exposed themselves before her. The crowd then set fire to the Congress office in Srinagar and those named in the first information report were all NC activists. When the elections finally took place, the NC activists were let loose

in the localities known for voting against the NC where they resorted to bogus voting in favour of their candidates. At one polling booth, a former inspector general of police was told that his vote had already been cast. Farooq Abdullah won most of the seats on the anti-India plank. Being in majority, he formed the government.

One of the worst anti-India events that occurred during his second tenure as the chief minister, was the riotous situation witnessed during the India–West Indies One Day International cricket match, held at Srinagar. During the match, choicest invectives were hurled at the Indian players. The whole stadium reverberated with anti-Indian and *Pakistan Zindabad* (long live Pakistan) slogans throughout the match. An attempt was also made to dig up the pitch. There was total pandemonium in the stadium. All this happened in front of the chief minister, who remained a mute witness to this anti-India drama throughout the day.

To the political parties outside the state, he projected himself merely as an anti-Congress chief minister, but in the valley his politics were out and out anti-national in both word and deed. His doublespeak served him well as he managed to befool a large number of opposition leaders. He attended many conclaves of opposition parties and organised some within his own state. The opposition parties were taken in by his shrewd manipulation of their anti-Congress stand to derive maximum political mileage for himself in the Valley. However, his anti-centre politics and persistent anti-India fulminations gave a fresh lease of life to anti-national forces in the state and they got a much needed fillip during his tenure. With the induction of fresh cadres into NC, mostly with an anti-Indian mindset, these elements organised and strengthened themselves within the party under the patronage of their benefactor, Farooq Abdullah. Farooq's poor administrative acumen further created a sense of despondency among the public, whose daily needs his

government could not meet. The rise in the activities of forces inimical to India, coupled with disenchantment of the public with routine governance, created an alarming situation that could be allowed to continue only at grave risk to the country. Indira Gandhi eased him out of office by engineering defections in his party, with the help of his own brother-in-law, GM Shah, who now became the chief minister with the support of Congress, in the middle of 1985.

Farooq left no stone unturned to endear himself to the opposition parties in India, with whom he had already developed a close rapport while in power. He now projected himself as a victim of Indira Gandhi's high handedness and another casualty of her propensity to dismiss state governments opposed to her and imposing President's rule there. Since there was some truth in the fact that Mrs Gandhi often dismissed state governments opposed to her on the flimsiest of grounds, Farooq, being a shrewd manipulator, did succeed to a large extent in gaining sympathy of the opposition parties.

Shah's installation as the chief minister proved to be a remedy worse than the disease. His misrule created chaos and confusion. Even those opposed to Farooq Abdullah did not feel happy with Shah. The hitherto unheard of phenomenon of bomb blasts and subversion became the order of the day. Frequent imposition of curfew brought life to a grinding halt. Many people felt that all this was being engineered by Farooq Abdullah through JKLF, to get back at his estranged brother-in-law, who was instrumental in divesting him of his chief ministership. With every passing day, the law and order situation was deteriorating further. GM Shah's government was dismissed in March 1986 and Governor's rule was imposed.

Governor's Rule

Governor's rule came as a soothing balm to the people of the

state who had been reeling under the mis-governance of Farooq and GM Shah, ever since Sheikh Abdullah's death in September 1982. Governor Jagmohan wasted little time in redressing the grievances of the people and putting the wheels of state administration in motion after these had ground to a virtual halt over the past few years. He made officers accountable after setting them targets which they were expected to achieve in a time-bound manner. He made valiant attempts to remove corruption. He improved the state of availability of water and power, which had become a major source of discontentment among the public. Governance became transparent. Roads, public transport, healthcare, education, public works, etc.; all showed considerable improvement during the Governor's rule. Jagmohan earned gratitude of people cutting across regional and religious divide for his administrative acumen and tireless efforts to address people's grievances. But the vested interests felt threatened. The disgruntled politicians, smugglers, drug peddlers, corrupt bureaucrats, black marketers and power brokers, all ganged up to defame the Governor. They started a smear campaign by calling him a Muslim baiter of the 'Turkman Gate' fame and a Hindu chauvinist. Jagmohan was not deterred by these allegations hurled at him and continued to deliver good governance. People, for the first time, saw and experienced an efficient and a responsive government.

Having experienced life without power, Farooq Abdullah now started mending fences with the centre by making use of his friendship with Rajiv Gandhi. Vested interests too started playing their role in bringing back an unpopular government, as their sources of ill-gotten wealth were drying up as a result of the Governor's rule. By then Rajiv too had decided to bring Farooq Abdullah back to power in coalition with his own Congress party. As a first step Rajiv eased out Mufti Mohammad Syed, who was opposed to Farooq Abdullah, from the presidentship of the state Congress party by inducting him into Central cabinet. Farooq need not have entered

into an electoral understanding with the Congress, as he would have won the elections on his own. Nevertheless, he chose to fight these elections in collaboration with Congress, as an insurance against any future challenge to his government from the centre, where Congress was in power (once bitten twice shy). Congress, on the other hand, just wanted to share power, used as it had got to its loaves and fishes! Therefore, for both, it was a marriage of convenience — a marriage between strange bed fellows. In due course, this coalition had a serious fall-out, particularly for the Congress. Being part of the ruling alliance with NC, the entire opposition space was filled -in by the sectarian forces. Besides, being a junior partner of NC, without much power, Congress could not retain its support base, as the Congress cadres were too enjoying the power and pelf that comes with wielding power. Farooq Abdullah shrewdly exploited this disgruntled state of Congress workers to poach on its cadres, and in due course of time, almost got party's influence wiped out from the state.

It was in these circumstances that the 1987 state assembly elections were held. Though the two leaders, namely Farooq Abdullah and Rajiv Gandhi had entered into an electoral alliance, it did not get translated into a joint working arrangement at the grass-roots level. Not too long ago NC workers had burnt the Congress office and indulged in subversive activities on the bidding of the same leaders who were now singing paeans to the alliance. Therefore, the disgruntled elements joined hands with sectarian forces to form a new alliance, called Muslim United Front (MUF). The Front comprised of Jammat-e-Islami (JeI), as its main component, besides People's Party, Itehad-ul-Muslimeen, Awami Action Committee, a breakaway faction of National Conference led by Ghulam Mohammad Shah and some youth groups. The MUF put up a united and impressive show in the run up to the elections. This unnerved the NC-Congress combine. It is now generally accepted that the MUF would not have

won more than 8–10 seats in the elections. But, being bent upon regaining power at any cost, the NC-Congress combine did not want to take any chances. It indulged in large-scale electoral malpractices. It used police and other organs of the administration to contrive the results, beating and humiliating its opponents in the process.

It would be worthwhile to examine the election in one such constituency in some detail, as the allegations of electoral malpractices indulged in by the officials on the orders of NC leaders, and widely believed to be true, had a far-reaching effect on the developing situation in the valley. Mohammad Yousuf Shah, who had been appointed *Amir* of the Srinagar district of JeI in 1986, was the candidate of the MUF from Amira Kadal constituency. His campaign managers were Yasin Malik, Javed Mir, Ashfaq Majid, Abdul Hamid Sheikh and Aijaz Dar. The NC candidate was Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Shah, a close relative of Farooq Abdullah. It is widely believed that the actual counting of votes that took place in Degree College Bemina, clearly established the MUF candidate to have won the election. However, when the results were announced, Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Shah was declared as the winner.

People were shocked and the naked undoing of people's verdict resulted in wide-spread and sullen resentment. Some of the youngsters got terribly infuriated and vowed to avenge the humiliation. One of those was Aijaz Dar, who was thrown out of the counting centre by the police and the NC candidate. He was so incensed that he shouted right outside the counting hall that he would shoot Farooq Abdullah and other NC leaders, as well as other top police and civil officers. As things turned out, Dar was killed in a police 'encounter' sometime later. Mohamad Yousuf Shah, alongwith all his polling agents, was arrested and imprisoned for nine months, during which he was allegedly tortured and humiliated. This particular act by the Congress-NC alliance is considered to be a turning point in the modern history of Kashmir

and the single biggest reason for the turmoil that engulfed the Valley soon thereafter.

In keeping with the old tradition of blaming India for all of Kashmir's ills, Delhi this time was seen as a direct accomplice in the electoral mal-practices, and worse, in the elimination of Aijaz Dar. The arrest, torture and humiliation meted out to Mohamad Yousuf Shah and his colleagues further fuelled the anger. This served as a spark that ignited the fire; a fire that engulfed the state in its flames for the next two decades. Mohamad Yousuf Shah later metamorphosed into Syed Sallah-ud-din and his election agents formed the vanguard of JKLF and were known by the acronym HAJY, formed by taking the first letter of their respective names. They decided to take up arms, which were made available from across the LoC by Pakistan. In the first year of militant turbulence that broke out in the Valley in 1989–90, Mohamad Yousuf Shah confined his activities to the JeI work, though many believe that it was during this period that he quietly devoted his efforts to building its military wing, the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM). It was in April 1991 that he became Sallah-ud-din and was appointed the *Amir* of HM (chapter-12, p. 420).

Terrorist activity that began in earnest got an impetus during Farooq Abdullah's second term in the office. In fact, it was New Delhi's indulgence of Farooq Abdullah that served as a trigger to usher in full-scale insurgency in the state in early 1990's. Initially, the militants indulged in bomb blasts and sniping at police officers. Later, they targeted buses, tourist coaches and central government offices. Some conscientious police officers took it as a challenge and succeeded in arresting quite a number of them, including some self-styled "Area Commanders" in the early days of militancy. "But in 1989, Farooq Abdullah released as many as 23 top militants on the plea that this would give them a chance to join the mainstream and claimed that this had the approval of Rajiv Gandhi."[3] This action of Farooq Abdullah dealt a severe blow to the morale of police officers

who had carried out their responsibilities in arresting these militants, at great risk to their lives. Some of them started receiving threats by the released militants on the phone. "They were advised by the terrorists to stay away and not to 'burn their fingers,' unnecessarily. The message being loud and clear had its desired effect. Some Police and civil officers were even seen saluting them."[4]

The militants, now emboldened by the government inaction, started burning the National Flag right under the nose of local police. They openly celebrated Pakistan's independence day on August 14, 1989, with great pomp and show. The next day, on August 15, 1989, they made a bonfire of Indian flags. They also observed a complete black-out in the evening, by burning transmission stations or by enforcing it by not letting the common people to switch on their lights. "Indian flag could be unfurled only in Ganpathyar temple in the heart of Srinagar after Hindus had sought protection of the police."[5] Such defiance of authority became a visible manifestation of their bolder expression of anti-national sentiments. In the meantime, introduction of gun culture started taking its toll. As the VIPs were adequately protected, it was the softer targets that bore the brunt of the fury let loose by the gun wielding militants. The victims included an odd political worker, a petty police officer, and more importantly, a number of defenceless Kashmiri Pandits. While all this was going on, the personnel of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) on duty watched helplessly, as they waited for orders from local police officers under whom they had been placed for operational matters.

In the next phase of increased violence, which started immediately thereafter, a number of school buildings were burnt and several business establishments had their godowns looted and ransacked. The rot that had set in was so deep that a Kalashnikov gun and some hand grenades and time bombs were recovered from the house of the then law minister's son-in-law: a junior engineer. The junior

engineer's younger brother was arrested by the police in this case, but was bailed out on the intervention of Farooq Abdullah. Bars and wine shops were now made the targets and were looted and bombed during day time. Prominent tourist hotels like the Broadway Hotel were asked to wind up their bars, while Amar Singh Club, Srinagar Club and Golf Course, which had Farooq Abdullah himself as their patron or president, had to close down their bars. Liquor traders were attacked, their premises looted and ransacked, forcing them to close their business. The fact is that much before December 1989, various terrorist outfits had established effective control in the valley.

The local press too played into the hands of the terrorists by giving prominence to their activities. This helped the militants to gain wide publicity. These newspapers also included the *Quami Awaz*, the official organ of the state Congress. The papers were threatened by the terrorists to refrain from writing anything that went against them or their activities. Even a prominent English language newspaper published from Jammu, the *Kashmir Times*, carried stories of terrorist activities in the valley most prominently.

Farooq Abdullah gave clear indications of his lack of interest in mending the grave situation that gripped his state by spending bulk of his time outside the country. It became apparent that he had nearly abdicated his responsibilities as the chief minister of the state. Even when he had remained effective head of the government, his high flying life style and profligate ways had played havoc with the state's finances. Plan funds were diverted to non-productive use. The lack of accountability was such that one of his own cabinet ministers owed a whopping 34 crore rupees of sales tax to the government. The sales tax was levied on the income that this particular minister had earned through the sale of cars from the agency which he and his family owned. Crores of rupees meant for cleaning up the fast-shrinking Dal Lake (due to encroachment by unscrupulous

elements, with active connivance of those in authority) were diverted to projects that hardly existed, with the sole aim of lining the pockets of politicians and bureaucrats. Farooq Abdullah's election promises of generating employment, improving law and order and spending money on development, were soon forgotten by him. Nepotism, corruption, lack of accountability and drift were the hallmarks of Farooq Abdullah's second term as the chief minister. This further alienated the people and caused a great deal of disenchantment with the unresponsive, and as some would say, irresponsible governance.

Pakistan sponsored militant organisations exploited these genuine public grievances to the hilt by fishing in the troubled waters of Kashmir. With the government machinery virtually grinding to a halt, a peculiar phenomenon of high handedness of terrorist tactics became the order of the day in 1988–89. This was the imposition of civil curfew. To showcase the reach and acceptability of their appeal, they would bring the administration and routine life to a standstill by imposing curfew themselves. They named it civil curfew. It was an extreme form of what is known as *bandh* or strike outside the valley. During such curfews, imposed by the terrorists, shops and business establishments owned by the Congress or NC supporters were the first to close. Sometimes, these curfews would last for days on end. The fear psychosis that gripped those in authority resulted in their actively collaborating with the militants. Even the personal weapons issued to the party workers found their way to the terrorists. Those who collaborated with the terrorists thus, had a ready explanation for such action; these weapons were snatched away by the terrorists!

It was during this period of heightened tension, uncertainty and widely perceived ineffectiveness of the state government, that an incident of far-reaching consequence took place in the Valley. On December 8, 1989, JKLF militants kidnapped Rubiya Syed, the daughter of an important Kashmiri leader and at that time, Home

Minister of India, Mufti Mohammad Syed. They held her hostage and demanded the release of five of their cadres in exchange for her release. The Government of India capitulated and accepted the militant demands to secure the release of Rubiya Syed. Her release in exchange of these hardcore militants on December 13, 1989, sent the spirits of militants and their supporters soaring. The irony of the situation was highlighted by the allegation that the kidnapped woman was seen moving around in the car of the son of a very senior Congress leader of the state, Ghulam Rasool Kar. Thousands of people came out on the streets of Srinagar, dancing and singing to celebrate their 'victory'. Anti-India slogans rent the air in every corner of Srinagar and other major towns. The Farooq Abdullah government literally fiddled while the Valley burnt. Its paralysis, or its deliberate willingness to toe the militant line, further emboldened the terrorists.

Notes

1. *Kashmir: Crises in Perspective*, Indian Research Institute for Kashmir Affairs.
2. Jarnail Singh Bindranwale, head of Damdami Taksal, a Sikh seminary, had turned from a veritable foe of Congress party into a virulently anti-Indian militant Sikh leader, who gradually assumed the leadership of armed Sikh militants that demanded a separate country for Sikhs, called Khalistan. He was later killed during 'Operation Blue Star' launched by Mrs Indira Gandhi on June 6, 1984, to cleanse the revered Sikh shrine, the Golden Temple at Amritsar, of militants, who had turned it into a fortress. The attack on Golden Temple created a great resentment among a large section of Sikhs, leading eventually to Mrs Gandhi's assassination by one of her own Sikh bodyguards.
3. Op.cit., n. 1.
4. Ibid.
5. *White Paper on Kashmir*, Joint Human Rights Committee, (Gupta Print Services, Delhi).

12

PAKISTAN'S OBSESSION WITH AND INTERVENTION IN KASHMIR

"Kashmir runs in our blood." —*General Parvez Musharraf*
(A former military dictator of Pakistan)

Pakistan's Obsession with Kashmir

Projecting itself as the saviour of Kashmiris, Pakistan has left no stone unturned to propagate its concern for Kashmiris. While many gullible Kashmiris fall for this propaganda, many others genuinely believe that Kashmiri Muslims are religiously obliged to demand Kashmir's accession to Pakistan. This, despite the fact that they are fully aware of the state of affairs in PoK. Economically, PoK lags behind the Indian administered part of Kashmir; politically it enjoys little freedom. Between 1949 and 1974, it was directly governed by the central government from Rawalpindi. Most of the top government functionaries, who belonged to the federal government service, were either Punjabis or Pushtuns. In 1974, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto gave it an autonomous governing set-up through an 'Interim Constitution'. It was termed 'interim' because the final constitution was meant to be given after the 'plebiscite' was held to decide the final fate of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, whose part it was. To this day, PoK continues to be governed by this constitution. The salient features of

the constitution are: President to act as head of state, a prime minister as head of the government and 48 legislators, (40 directly elected and 8 indirectly) to form the local assembly. The province was allowed to use its own national flag and issue its own passports. However, no country recognised these passports. Therefore, people had to travel on Pakistani passports. Besides these entitlements, PoK was also given its own national anthem, an election commission, an auditor general, a supreme court, high court and subordinate courts.

That all this is a façade behind which Pakistan continued to perpetuate an iron grip on the state, is evident from numerous restrictions placed on its functioning; a candidate is eligible to fight elections only if he signs a declaration to the effect that PoK is part of Pakistan. Article 32 of the Interim Constitution of PoK stipulates that the legislative assembly cannot make any laws related to currency, trade, external affairs, defence and security of the state. Almost all important decisions of the PoK government are subject to approval by 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir Council' which is based in Islamabad and functions under a federal minister, designated as the 'Federal Minister of State for Kashmir and Northern Areas (of Pakistan) Affairs.' The council consists of five federal ministers nominated by the prime minister of Pakistan, who also presides over its sittings. Besides them, PoK is represented on the council by the federal minister of state for Kashmir and Northern Areas (of Pakistan) Affairs, who is an ex-officio member, president of PoK and its prime minister, or a minister in his absence. Thus various stiff measures were put in place to strengthen the federal stranglehold over PoK. With all these restrictions on its political freedom, it is ironic to call it *Azad Kashmir* (Free Kashmir). It could take decades for PoK to enjoy the degree of political freedom that Indian administered Kashmir enjoys. Nevertheless, having mastered the tools of disinformation, Pakistan continues to fool the rest of the world by projecting Kashmiris as 'suffering under the yoke of Indian occupation forces.'

The people of Northern Areas (NA) suffered a worse fate. Leaders of various political parties of this area who have been fighting for the rights of the people here call themselves the 'no where' people as they have been totally abandoned by the people of Pakistan. It was separated from PoK and brought directly under Pakistan control, much like FATA, (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) near the Afghan border. It was governed under the Frontier Crime Regulation framed by the British to control criminal tribes near the Afghan border. The people of this region were denied the facility of passports and were barred from travelling abroad. The draconian regulation required every citizen to report to the police station once every month. Similarly, they were also required to report their movement from one village to another. Imposition of collective fines on an entire village for individual inhabitant's violation of law was common. Till as late as 1994, the people of NA did not enjoy the right to vote. They neither had an elected legislative assembly nor a municipal council. They did not have any representation even in the national assembly. As a matter of fact, political parties were banned there. It was only in 1994, that Benazir Bhutto allowed political parties of Pakistan (not of PoK) to open branches there. Most Pakistani political parties, including Tehrik-e-Jaffaria Pakistan (TJP), a Shia Muslim party, extended their activities to the NA. One of the adverse fall outs of this opening up was the setting up of Sipah-e-Sahaba, Pakistan, a militant Sunni Muslim organisation, with the help and encouragement of the ISI in the area, mainly to oppose TJP. The fact is that this extremist Sunni party has for long been campaigning for declaring Shias as non-Muslims. Incidentally, in the complete Constitution of Pakistan comprising 12 chapters, the name of Gilgit-Baltistan does not figure even once.

To create a façade of the provincial legislative assembly, Pakistan in October 1994, held party-based elections to elect 26 members of the NA executive council, much like, and having the same powers, as the NWFP legislative assembly. However, it emerged later that the

council was given only recommendatory powers and not the legislative powers. Five of its members were later designated as advisors to the federal minister of Kashmir and NA (of Pakistan) affairs. Though it was announced at that time that these 'Advisors' would be given the same status as ministers of PoK, in actual fact, even those limited powers were not given to them. Consequently, NA continue to be ruled from Islamabad with the help of six officers, all outsiders. These are the chief executive officer, the commissioner, the inspector general of police, the judicial commissioner and the chief engineer. On most occasions, the first two posts were held by retired army officers and others by non-natives. The level of democracy existing can be gauged from the fact that the right of appeal against the judgements of the judicial commissioner did not exist, as supreme court of Pakistan had no jurisdiction over him. That much for the way Pakistan treats its own people belonging to the pre-1947 Jammu and Kashmir State. Engineer Ali Rinchen writes, "For Pakistan, Gilgit-Baltistan is like a summer camping ground. They can be compared with the Mongols of the ninth century who conquered China but failed to see its variety of resources and the worth of its people. For them China was only good for grazing pastures for their horses. Pakistan rulers share the same approach towards Gilgit-Baltistan."[1]

Right from the beginning, Pakistan left no stone unturned to undermine the Indian voice in Jammu and Kashmir. It created a nucleus around which it built its strategy to implement its anti-India tirade. For this, it relied heavily on the MC cadres (who had supported the invading Pakistan army in 1947–48 war), the Muslim middle class and some sections of Kashmir bureaucracy. This nucleus was further reinforced by the volunteers of the 'Muslim Guard', which had been formed immediately after the partition. Muslim intellectuals and some disgruntled elements of the NC provided the much-needed ideological justification for Pakistan's interference. This nucleus turned into a well-knit organisation, which communalised

the Kashmiri society by its persistent disinformation campaign, though it rarely attracted much attention or publicity. It exploited the religious sentiments of the people by projecting Kashmiris as part of the larger *Ummah*, which was under subjugation of the infidel. Its propaganda machinery worked overtime to condemn the Indian secularism as un-Islamic. It targeted the Kashmiri Pandits specifically by projecting them as the enemies of Islam and as the community had consistently worked to consolidate Kashmir's links with India.

For Pakistan, Kashmir has significance far beyond being a merely territorial dispute with India. 'It runs in our blood,' as Pervez Musharraf, a former dictator of Pakistan, once described it. Elaborating further on this argument, he described it the 'core' issue between Pakistan and India. For Pakistan, the issue is territorial, religious, political, moral and existential — all rolled into one. Generations of Pakistanis have been brought up on half-truths about Kashmir. On many occasions, the hurly burly of chaotic but authentic Indian democratic process, witnessed in the valley too, is projected as evidence of Kashmir being on fire as a result of suppression of its desire to secede from the Indian state. The so called ill-treatment of and discrimination against Kashmiri Muslims is projected as the final argument to motivate the people of Pakistan to come to the rescue of their co-religiousnists in Kashmir. Pakistan's proxies in the state, together with some vested interests, who have fattened themselves on the bounty coming from both sides, have played no small role in contributing to the success of Pakistan's propaganda.

At international level, Pakistan never loses an opportunity to remind the world that South Asia would continue to simmer as long as 'Kashmir' issue is not resolved. What it leaves unsaid is that it wants 'it' resolved to its own satisfaction. Pakistan has used many arguments to justify the importance of gaining Kashmir at all costs. A former president of Pakistan justified it in following words:

"Kashmir is vital for Pakistan not only politically, but militarily as well. Kashmir is a matter of life and death (December 1959)." Later, on July 19, 1961, he further said, "...Kashmir is important to us for physical as well as economic security..." Continuing in the same vein, he added, "...You might say 'why can't you give up Kashmir.' Well, we can't give up that dispute because we are bloody minded... for example, for the reason that Kashmir is connected with our physical security. Thirty-two million of acres in Pakistan are irrigated from rivers that start in Kashmir."[2]

According to another argument, Pakistan was created as a state exclusively for the Muslims of South Asia. All Pakistani governments have, since independence, worked on this basic presumption. When cross-exodus between India and Pakistan ended with the completion of partition process, 40 million Muslims were left in India and 12 million Hindus in Pakistan. The existing figures of these two communities in the respective countries, i.e., 145 million Muslims in India and less than half a million Hindus in Pakistan today, itself speaks about the Islamisation drive carried out by successive Pakistani governments. But more importantly, today more Muslims are living in India than in Pakistan. Overlooking this reality, Pakistan does not tire of its constant refrain that Jammu and Kashmir, being a Muslim majority state, should have automatically become part of Pakistan. Barnett R Rubin and Ahmed Rashid state in the November-December, 2008, issue of *Foreign Affairs*, "The Pakistan military command... shares a commitment to a vision of Pakistan as a homeland for South Asian Muslims and, therefore, to the incorporation of Kashmir into Pakistan." Consequently, for the Pakistan, Kashmir is the unfinished agenda of Partition. However, Pakistan conveniently forgets that out of 145 million Muslims living in India, only 3–4 million live in Jammu and Kashmir. It also forgets to mention that 150 million Muslims themselves chose to separate from Pakistan to form Bangladesh in 1971. Besides, it is well worth

recalling, that Jinnah seemed to have no objection in soliciting the accession of Junagarh, Hyderabad, Jaisalmer and Jodhpur to Pakistan — all Hindu majority States. Even the port city of Karachi, soon to become the capital of Pakistan immediately after its creation, was at the time of partition, a Hindu majority city, as were some other cities of Sindh. In fact Sindh's separation from India appeared to be an absurdity as River Sindhu, which passes through this province, not only gives India its name, "but the very name and identity of Indus Valley Civilisation, the cradle of subcontinent's civilisational heritage, is derived from River Sindhu."[3] In fact, the word 'Hindu' is itself derived from Sindhu.

That, Kashmir, being a Muslim majority state, should have become part of Pakistan, overlooks the fact that according to Government of India (Independence) Act, people of the princely states had no power to decide their own fate, as this decision had been left to the rulers; a condition that Jinnah whole-heartedly supported. Besides, Pakistan ruined its own case by trying to grab Kashmir by force, compelling the Maharaja to seek assistance from India — an assistance, which India gave only after it accepted the accession and was, thus, legally, well within its rights to provide.

Even otherwise also, taking into consideration the animosity between Jinnah and Abdullah, it is certain that the latter and his NC, the overwhelmingly popular party of the State at the time of independence, would have decided in favour of India. Sheikh Abdullah's utterances on the issue during that period, make that abundantly clear. Indian leaders were so sure of Kashmiri sentiment prevailing at that time that they repeatedly pleaded with the Maharaja to hand over power to Sheikh Abdullah, who would then decide on the issue. This can be gauged from the statement of Sheikh Abdullah himself, who declared in the Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly, "We the people of Jammu and Kashmir have thrown our

lot with Indian people not in the heat of passion or a moment of despair, but by a deliberate choice. The union of our people has been fused by the community of ideals and common sufferings in the cause of freedom." Similar was the strain of the resolution passed at a special convention of NC held in October, 1948, to consider the matter of accession of the state with the Indian Union. It stated, "The convention has given its serious thought to the question of accession and has examined it in all its aspects and detail. After mature consideration of the issue, it is definitely of the opinion that Kashmir, with its unflinching faith in New Kashmir and with the very advanced outlook of its people on the fundamental issues, cannot find its proper place in Pakistan which today has become a main citadel of reaction and decaying feudalism... Pakistan, with its basis in two-nation theory and its persistence in the perpetuation of religious distinctions, does not and cannot accommodate a programme and an outlook which is the very negative of its basis and conceptions of social justice."[4]

Sheikh Abdullah's own choice of India for accession was not an impulsive decision but based on a well thought out reasoning; Kashmiris would be better off with a democratic and secular India and they would receive a fair treatment from a progressive nation rather than from a theocratic state like Pakistan. Addressing the Constituent Assembly of the state, Sheikh Abdullah said on November 5, 1951, "…We are proud to have our bonds with India, the goodwill of whose people and government are available to us in unstinted and abundant measure... The Indian Constitution has set before the country the goal of secular democracy based upon justice, freedom and equality for all without distinction. This is the bedrock of modern democracy."[5] It is worth reminding Pakistan that when it "purchased the port city of Gwadar from the Sultanate of Muscat, no opportunity was given to the people of Gwadar to have any say or voice any objection to being purchased as chattel."[6]

Some Pakistani writers also complain that the British should have handed over the undivided India to Muslims when they left the country, as they had taken it from Mughals, rather than hand it over to Hindus (for them Indian National Congress represented only Hindus of the subcontinent). Says Tarik Jan, a scholar at Islamabad's Institute of Policy Studies, "We (Muslims) were the legal rulers of India, and in 1857 the British took that away from us. In 1947, they should have given that back to the Muslims." Jan's desire to see India, Pakistan and Bangladesh re-united under Islamic rule touches a sympathetic chord among the people of Pakistan, as most of them yearn for the bygone days of the golden era of Mughal rule in India and the Muslim caliphate internationally. It is a different matter that Mughals, the greatest of the Muslim Dynasties to rule India, had entirely Indianised themselves. Nadeem Paracha writes, "Mughals, though Central Asian by decent, where deeply entrenched in the political and social traditions of the subcontinent, as was their Muslim polity..."[7]

Besides, Tariq Jan's argument misses another crucial point. When the East India Company traders came to India, huge swathes of its territory were no longer under effective Mughal rule, as its long decline and fall had already given rise to the emergence of many regional chieftains. For three quarters of the 18th century, it was these regional powers which determined its fate rather than any central Muslim authority. The Maratthas, Rajputs, Sikhs, Jats and many other communities had created their own areas of dominance, independent of the weak Mughal ruler. The absence of a powerful central authority was one of the main reasons why East India Company, found it easy to establish its hold on the country. The British, over a period of 100 years, got all these regional powers under its suzerainty, creating a politically unified India in the process, perhaps for the first time in its history. Nearly 200 years of British rule and the exposure to modern education had, in the meanwhile, given rise to scientific temperament and democratic aspirations among vast sections of Indian society. Jinnah himself was a product

of this process. Therefore, for the British to have handed over the power back to Muslims is a specious and meaningless argument, to say the least.

Nevertheless Pakistani hardliners, including its press, continue to harp on this theme. One of Pakistan's hardline English newspapers, *Daily Jasarat*, articulating Jan's sentiment in the editorial of its Friday supplement of August 19, 2007, wrote, "The slogan of Jehad should reverberate in every nook and corner of Pakistan. If Pakistan allows Jehad to infiltrate into India, then Kashmir could be liberated in six months. Within a couple of years, the rest of the territories of India could be conquered as well, and we can regain our lost glory. We can bring back the era of Mughal rule. We can once again subjugate the Hindus like our forefathers did." That, during the past over a decade Pakistan's ISI has tried to achieve exactly that is borne out by the report put out by India's premier investigative agency, the National Investigating Agency (NIA), which noted in 2011, that "the conspiracy for recruiting young men into LeT terror network for training in Kashmir, which had come to light with the killing of four Malayalee militants in the valley in 2008, was hatched in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Dubai and Oman: Also, LeT bosses from Pakistan had a direct involvement in camps held for such recruitments."[8]

Jinnah was himself terribly dissatisfied by what he got at the end of his viciously communal campaign to create a separate state for the Muslims of the subcontinent. In the end, what he got is best described in his own words; "a moth-eaten Pakistan." Ajeet Jawed, a well-known author, who has written a widely acclaimed book on Jinnah, writes "He was a sad and a sick man: He cried in agony, 'I have committed the biggest blunder in creating Pakistan and would like to go to Delhi and tell Nehru to forget the follies of the past and become friends again.'"[9] Alas! It was too late. He was too sick and more importantly, by now Pakistan's destiny was no longer in his hands. It was controlled by those who had used him, with his

immense popularity and charisma, to create a state for feudal lords and religious fanatics. It is further confirmed by what is recorded in the *TIME* magazine of December 23, 1986, "The final judgement rendered by the wealthy lawyer from Mumbai who carved out Pakistan for the Muslims of South Asia, as Jinnah put it: Pakistan, he said, 'has been the biggest mistake of my life.'"[10]

After Jinnah's death, Pakistan has more or less been ruled by its army, in collaboration with Islamists of all hues and supported by America. It is for this reason that Pakistan is considered to be a state run by three 'As'; Army, America and Allah. Over the years, for their own geo-strategic interests, the US and its closest ally, Britain, have been its biggest supporters. As a result, Pakistan got inexorably sucked into the US-led military blocks, first, as a member of the Baghdad Pact, then its new avatar the CENTO, and SEATO. Even though it was an anti-Communist alliance, Pakistan used its membership only to foment trouble in Kashmir, equipped as it was with modern military wherewithal and recipient of huge economic assistance. Pakistan therefore, succeeded to a large extent, in keeping Kashmir issue in international focus. It fancied its biggest chance in 1965, as it felt that India had sufficiently been weakened by its defeat at the hands of China in the 1962 war, and further, after Nehru's demise in 1964, it did not have a strong enough leader to steer it in difficult times. Therefore, it resorted to its time-tested method of sending the irregulars under the command of serving army officers to foment an uprising in the valley. To make it doubly sure that the plan succeeded in cutting off Kashmir from India, it followed it up with a thrust of its armoured division in the Chhamb-Jourian sector, in order to cut off Poonch, Rajouri, Nowshera, Sunderbani and Akhnoor from the State.

Convinced that Indian reaction would be tepid and Kashmiris will rise in revolt against India at the first sight of Pakistani Mujahideen,

Pakistan was in for a shock on both counts. Kashmiris were not enamoured of the infiltrators and, assisted the security forces in eliminating them.[11] At the national level, India reacted fiercely with its own armoured formations, sending them towards Sialkot and Lahore. The unnerved Pakistanis withdrew from Akhnoor–Jourian sector to areas behind Munnawar Tawi. India made significant gains in Jammu and Kashmir, by capturing the strategic Hajipir Pass. Pakistan immediately offered ceasefire, as it was running out of ammunition. India accepted the offer as the war was thrust on it and there was no point prolonging the war without a clear-cut objective.

Pakistan suffered a decisive defeat in the 1971 Indo-Pak war. But India could hardly extract any concession from Pakistan on the Kashmir issue, despite holding nearly 95,000 Pakistani troops as Prisoners of War. At Simla, India let Pakistan off the hook by trusting the verbal assurance given by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to Indira Gandhi. Bhutto had assured Indira Gandhi that he would mould public opinion in Pakistan in a manner that the LoC gets wide acceptance as the international border between the two countries. PN Dhar, who was present at Simla, wrote, "It was thought that with the gradual use of the LoC as a de facto frontier, public opinion on both sides would get reconciled to its permanence... when Mrs Gandhi, after recounting their points of agreement finally asked Bhutto; Is this the understanding on which we will proceed? He replied, 'Absolutely'."[12] The other two significant points on which both agreed were that India and Pakistan would treat Kashmir as a bilateral issue and both countries will desist from resorting to use of force to resolve the issue. Over the years, Pakistan has reneged on both the issues forming part of the Simla Agreement. Pakistan continues to harp on the implementation of UN Resolutions on Kashmir and as far as non-use of force to resolve the issue is concerned; Pakistan's misadventure in Kargil in 1999 violated that provision too.

Zia-ul-Haque's Islamisation Drive

Zia-ul-Haque's seizing power in Pakistan in late 70's resulted in far-reaching changes in Pakistan's domestic politics and its policy of dealing with India. It is a well-known fact that Islamic fundamentalist parties of Pakistan have always sided with the army during its long spells in power in Pakistan, providing it the fig leaf of popular legitimacy. However, during Zia-ul-Haque's rule the leaders of these parties became important decision-makers and their ideology, the yard stick against which every decision was measured. As a first step, he Islamized all institutions of Pakistan, particularly its all-important army, which till then had, by and large, retained its secular legacy, inherited from the British Indian army. To create a young breed of radical Jehadis, Zia now targeted the schools, where impressionable minds would be easy to mould.

School text books were revised to distort facts in such a manner that India and particularly Hindus, were always presented in a very negative light. Sample these untruths contained in Class V text books: "The British had the objective to take over India and to achieve this, they made Hindus join them and Hindus were very glad to side with the British. After capturing the subcontinent, British began, on the one hand, loot of all things produced in this area, and on the other, in conjunction with Hindus, to greatly suppress the Muslims."[13] Even the facts surrounding the break-up of Pakistan and creation of Bangladesh have been crudely twisted in order to present the whole episode as a consequence of conspiracy involving US, Soviet Union and India. Rather than making public the findings of Mehmood-ur-Rehman Commission, the government teaches students of Class IX to XII that, "A large number of Hindu teachers were teaching in the educational institutions in East Pakistan. They produced such literature which created negative thinking in the minds of Bengalis against the people of West Pakistan. About 10 million Hindus were living in East Pakistan. India stood at the back of these Hindus

to protect their interests. India wanted to separate East Pakistan to strengthen the economic position of these Hindus...."[14] Even more lies, "In the 1971, India-Pakistan war, the Pakistani Armed Forces created new records of bravery and the Indian forces were defeated everywhere."[15] Surrender of over 95,000 Pakistani troops to Indian Army or for that matter, the uprising in and secession of East Pakistan, finds no mention.

Arif Mohamad Khan writes in the *Pioneer* of February 28, 2009, "What radicalised the Pakistani society most was the new education policy and curriculum introduced at the school level, underlining jehad and martyrdom as lofty ideals." Objective of Pakistan's education policy is contained in the preface to Class VI syllabus, which says, "Social studies have been given special importance in the educational policy, so that Pakistan's basic ideology assumes the shape of a way of life and its practical enforcement is assured. The concept of social uniformity adopts a practical form and the whole personality of the individual is developed."[16] Arif Mohamad Khan further states that this statement should leave no one in doubt that social uniformity and not national unity, is part of Pakistan's basic ideology." That is why students of Class III are taught that, "Mohammad Ali (Jinnah) felt that the Hindus wanted to make the Muslims their slaves and since he hated slavery, he left the Congress."

Tariq Rehman, a leading Pakistani educationist, commenting on such hateful literature, wrote, "It is a fact that the text books cannot mention Hindus without calling them 'cunning', 'scheming', deceptive' or something equally insulting: students are taught and made to believe that Pakistan needs strong and aggressive policies against India or else Pakistan would be annihilated by it."[17] The US Commission on International Religious Freedom acknowledged in its report released on November 9, 2011 that "Pakistani text books foster hatred and intolerance of minorities, the Hindus in particular..."[18] The report goes on to say, "Pakistan and social studies

texts are rife with negative comments regarding India and Great Britain, but Hindus are often singled out for particular criticism in texts and interview responses."[19] The Commission Chairman, Leonard Leo warned, "The teaching discrimination increases the likelihood that violent religious extremism in Pakistan will continue to grow, weakening religious freedom, national and regional stability and global security."[20] The report further cites the National Commission for Justice and Peace as saying, "government-issued textbooks teach students that Hindus are backward and superstitious, and given a chance they would assert their power over the weak, especially, Muslims, depriving them of education by pouring molten lead in their ears..."[21] Arif Mohamad Khan further adds, "This education policy contributed in great measure in radicalising whole generation of people in Pakistan."

To create radicalised youth, willing to embrace Jehad, thousands of *madrassas* were opened throughout Pakistan under the government patronage. Amir Mir, writing in *Talibanisation of Pakistan from 9/11 to 26/11,* puts the figure of registered madrassas at 11,000; having swelled from 250 in 1947. He, however, cautions that the figure of unregistered ones would be at a conservative figure of 45,000. Respected Pakistani academician and distinguished columnist, Pervez Hoodbhoy, writes, "According to the national education census, which the ministry of education released in 2006, Punjab has 5,459 madrassas followed by the NWFP with 2,843; Sindh has 1,935; the FANA, 1,193; Balochistan, 769; Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), 586; the Federally Administrated Tribal Areas (FATA), 135; and the Islamabad Capital Territory, 77. The ministry estimates that 1.5 million students are acquiring religious education in the 13,000 madrassas. These figures appear to be way off the mark. Commonly quoted figures range between 18,000 and 22,000 madrassas."[22] He further states, "Extremism is breeding at a ferocious rate in public and private schools within Pakistan's cities and towns."[23]

In radicalising Pakistan's education policy with narrow interpretation of its religious philosophy, Zia-ul-Haque was only following on the footsteps of Jinnah, who, while speaking to the All India Students Federation in Jallandhar in 1943, said, "In my opinion, our system of government was determined by the Quran some 1,350 years ago." Similarly, the resolution passed by Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Hind in 1939, while opposing the Wardha Scheme of Education had stated, "The Wardha scheme emphasises the philosophy of non-violence and presents it as a creed. We have accepted non–violence only as a policy. This cannot be accepted as a creed. This is against the teaching of Qu'ran which encourages Muslims to Jehad."[24] It further stated, "The danger of Wardha scheme is that children will be indoctrinated in such a way that not only would they be friendly to other religious groups, but they would also consider every religion of the world a true religion. This belief is un-Islamic."[25]

To formalise his drive to Islamise Pakistan, and project it as a religious duty, Zia added Article 2A to the 1973 Constitution, making the principles of the Objective Resolution ("Muslims in Pakistan shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Qu'ran and the Sunnah") as effective part of the Constitution."[26]

The consequences of the total segregation of the sexes, a central goal of the Islamists, have been catastrophic. This was visible during the 2005 earthquake that had caused widespread destruction in PoK and adjoining areas. MJ Akbar writes, "During the 2005 earthquake male students of Frontier Medical College were stopped by religious fanatics from saving girls from the rubble of the school building. The girls were allowed to die rather than be 'polluted' by the male touch."[27] Something similar happened on April 9, 2006, when 21 women and eight children were crushed to death and scores injured in a stampede inside a three-storey madrassa in Karachi, where a

large number of women were attending a weekly congregation. Male rescuers, who arrived in ambulances, were prevented from moving the injured women to hospitals," writes Hoodbhoy. He further adds, "Pakistan's self-inflicted suffering comes from an education system that, like Saudi Arabia's system, provides an ideological foundation for violence and future Jehadists."[28]

Afghanistan; Pakistan's Testing Ground

In 1978, King Zahir Shah's overthrow in Afghanistan was followed by a string of pro-Soviet regimes, leading to direct Soviet intervention and eventual occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet forces in December, 1979. This development brought Pakistan face to face with the Soviet forces, turning the former into a frontline state in the on-going Cold War. Due to its geographical location, Pakistan turned itself into an asset for the US to take on the Soviet forces in land-locked Afghanistan. Worried as it is about lacking strategic depth against any thrust by India from the east, Pakistan could ill-afford to have India's all-weather friend, the Soviet Union occupying Afghanistan. Having made the US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger's visit to China possible in 1971, Pakistan had endeared itself to the Americans as never before. This visit had brought about a tectonic shift in the international power balance and opened a new vista in the Sino-US relations.

Pakistan played up the Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan to warn Americans that Soviet expansion into South Asia was imminent. Hussein Haqqani writes in his much acclaimed book, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military,* "The Pakistanis developed an interest in painting a menacing picture of Soviet influence in Afghanistan to bolster their own position as the first line of defence against Soviet expansion into South Asia. The Pakistani Army needed weapons to maintain its ascendency at home and to face India, and the military officers realised that the United States would be willing

to modernise Pakistani forces to face the menace of communism. Because a threat from India did not qualify as a communist threat, Pakistani officials thought they could make a case for securing US aid by invoking geopolitics and the history of southward invasion from across the Hindu Kush."[29]

In January 1979, the Islamic revolution in Iran had swept away the Shah of Iran, a staunch supporter of US, into exile. The Shah was replaced by the Islamists who were virulently anti-American. Soviet presence in Afghanistan now added to their woes. Zia-ul-Haque saw in these developments a twin opportunity; first, to create a friendly regime in Afghanistan that would do its bidding and solve Pakistan's problem of being beset with the lack of strategic depth, and second, enable Pakistan to secure huge financial and military aid that it could utilise to annex Jammu and Kashmir. He exploited the situation to the hilt. As expected, military and financial aid began flowing into Pakistan not only from US and its allies, but also from the petro-dollar rich Muslim countries led by Saudi Arabia. Diplomatically, Pakistan attained a high profile; it suddenly found itself being courted by all and sundry. Pakistan now became a frontline state, ready to implement the agenda of US and its allies. "Soviet invasion of Afghanistan provided the excuse for adopting 'Jehad' as state policy as well as a medley of irregular forces, liberally funded by American and Saudi money," writes MJ Akbar.[30] "During the war against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, madrassas provided the US-Saudi-Pakistani alliance the cannon fodder they needed to fight a holy war. The Americans and Saudis, helped by a more-than-willing General Zia, funded new madrassas across the length and breadth of Pakistan,"[31] writes Pervez Hoodbhoy. More importantly, the situation in Afghanistan provided Zia with a golden opportunity to wrest Kashmir from India; using the same means which Americans were applying in Afghanistan to evict Soviet Union from there.

Having been convinced after the 1971 war that wresting Kashmir from India through a conventional war was no longer an option, Zia decided to adopt the route of Jehad. By now Zia-ul-Haque had succeeded in radically Islamising Pakistani institutions, education system and the critical segments of Pakistani society, which exercised considerable influence in shaping public opinion, during his decade-long rule. Therefore, finding recruits and a reliable organisation for the forthcoming Jehad in Kashmir would not present insurmountable odds. For providing the foot soldiers for this Jehad, he chose his trusted ally, the JeI. In early eighties, Zia held meeting with Maulana Abdul Bari, in which the former made clear to the latter that, "He had decided to contribute to the American sponsored war in Afghanistan in order to prepare the ground for a larger conflict in Kashmir and he wanted to involve the JeI of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.... The war in Afghanistan would be a smoke screen behind which Pakistan could carefully prepare a more significant battle in Kashmir."[32]

Zia had intelligently calculated that US involvement in Afghanistan would be a distraction enough for it to turn a blind eye to whatever Pakistan did in the region. To overcome Bari's skepticism of the whole operation, Zia persuasively argued, "How could Americans stop us from waging Jehad in Kashmir, when they are themselves waging a Jehad in Afghanistan."[33] To get the JeI leaders from Kashmir on board, Bari had a secret meeting with Maulana Said-ud-Taribilli, the first *Amir* of JeI, at village Ajis, where it was made clear to the latter that Kashmiris would have to rise in revolt and the rest would be taken care of by the ISI. To seal the whole deal, in September 1982, JeI leaders from Kashmir were secretly taken from Saudi Arabia, their official destination, to Pakistan, where their leader, Taribilli, had a meeting with Zia, who convinced him of the viability of the project. To plan, execute and oversee the whole operation, Zia chose its trusted and powerful intelligence agency, the ISI, as it is known all over the world.

Brief Description of ISI

The Directorate of Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan was established in 1948 under the supervision of Major General William Cawthorn, a British army officer in Pakistan army at the time of partition. He held the post of deputy chief of the army staff of Pakistan army. The raising of the ISI was necessitated by the need to plug the gaps that were noticed in the coordination of 'intelligence gathering' amongst the three services (army, navy and air force) in the 1947–48 war. Army's Military Intelligence Directorate had been found wanting in many respects during the just concluded war. During the initial years, the ISI remained an ordinary intelligence organisation, till General Ayub Khan, seized power in a military coup in 1958. General Ayub Khan used the ISI to consolidate his hold on power, rather than use it for the original purpose for which it was raised. In order to enable the ISI to carry out this political task, its role was officially expanded to include, "Coordinating the intelligence gathering and other related functions of all three services, safeguarding Pakistan's vital interests, monitoring activities of politicians and sustaining military rule in Pakistan." Before long, the ISI got sucked into the vortex of Pakistan's turbulent politics, characterised by intrigue, violence, politicking and constant battle of wits between the political parties and the army.

Over the years, its involvement in domestic politics has become even more extensive and deeper. ISI's tasks now include collection of foreign and domestic intelligence carrying out surveillance over its own cadre, foreigners, the diplomats of various countries, accredited to Pakistan, politically sensitive segments of Pakistani society, Pakistani diplomatic corps posted outside the country; monitoring and interception of communications, and conduct of covert operations. Today, it has become one of the most powerful intelligence agencies in the world. Its strength lies in hatching conspiracies, indulging in intrigue, exporting/fomenting terrorism, peddling misinformation and patronising all known and unknown anti-Indian elements.

Prior to 1958, the ISI would report directly to the commander in-chief of Pakistan army. However, after the imposition of martial law, all intelligence agencies were brought directly under the control of the president and the chief martial law administrator. Consequently, intelligence agencies competed with each other to project their own organisations as more loyal than the other. Ayub Khan used this inter-organisational rivalry to strengthen his own position in power. In the 1964 presidential elections, extensive use was made of the ISI to monitor the activities of Awami League and other political parties of East Pakistan. The ISI's primary focus increasingly shifted from intelligence gathering/coordination to meddling in domestic politics. Gradually, the ISI's involvement with Pakistan's politics itself became deeper with every passing year; a development that has only grown stronger over the years. This was the basic reason for the dismal performance 'Pakistan's military intelligence' in the 1965 Indo-Pak war. In 1970 general elections in Pakistan, under General Yahaya Khan, ISI spent huge amount of money to ensure that Awami League[34] did not get majority on its own. But it failed miserably. But Yahaya Khan refused to invite Sheikh Mujibur Rehman to form the government, despite his party, the Awami League, emerging victorious. Dishonouring the election verdict resulted in the breakout of an uprising in East Pakistan. Yahya Khan used Pakistan army to crush this uprising. The ISI even made attempts to infiltrate into the inner circles of the Awami League, which eventually proved disastrous, as the Eastern Wing broke free from Pakistan's yoke and became an independent country, Bangladesh.

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who now took over the reins of what remained of Pakistan, as its first democratically elected leader, tried to clip the wings of the ISI. As a first step in this direction, he appointed Lieutenant General Ghulam Geelani Khan as its Director General. But so deeply was the ISI entrenched in Pakistan's domestic politics that even Bhutto became dependant on it to strengthen his hold on

political power. Additionally, he used the ISI to put down the rebellion in Baluchistan with a heavy hand. All these happenings, instead of helping curb the ISI's role in domestic politics, contributed in further strengthening the same. During the seven years that Ghulam Geelani Khan remained at the helm of ISI, it became an inseparable part of Pakistan's turbulent politics. In fact, Bhutto ended up expanding ISI's role in domestic politics rather than curbing it; something that he had intended to do.

It was on the strong recommendations of Ghulam Geelani Khan that Bhutto promoted Zia-ul-Haque, an acknowledged Islamist, to the post of chief of the army staff, in the process superseding a number of officers senior to him. To return the favour, Zia retained Khan as the director general of ISI, despite the latter having reached the age of superannuation. When Bhutto realised that ISI had become too powerful and was not under his control, he created a new intelligence set up, the Federal Security Force (FSF), to counter the former's influence and reach. However, after Bhutto was toppled and Zia seized power, FSF was abolished and Bhutto was subsequently hanged. During Zia's rule, ISI truly graduated to becoming a state within a state. In ISI, he found an efficient, willing, convenient and obedient tool to carry out his aggressive Islamisation of the Pakistani society and the elimination of internal opposition to his policies. Exporting and fomenting terrorism became an acceptable means of statecraft during Zia-ul Haque's rule.

Soviet intervention in Afghanistan provided Zia with an ideal opportunity to enlarge the role of the ISI internationally, with the help of Saudi Arabia and US. The former provided money and Islamic ideological sanction and the latter with arms, ammunition, money, technical know-how and intelligence backup. Recent secret documents made public by WikiLeaks carry a secret memo of US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, which states, "Donors in Saudi Arabia contribute the most significant source of funding to Sunni

terrorist groups worldwide... Saudi Arabia remains a critical financial support base for Al Qaeda, Taliban, LeT and other terrorist groups."[35] All these organisations have umbilical connections to ISI.

Zia cleverly manipulated the implications of Islamic revolution in Iran in such a manner that Pakistan's own objectives in the region became coterminous with the foreign policy objectives of US. Soviet invasion of Afghanistan turned Pakistan into a frontline state against the communist takeover. This provided a fresh opportunity to ISI to renew and reinforce its already institutionalised relationship with CIA. Right from the 'cold war' days, when Pakistan's Peshawar airbase served as a convenient, innocuous and strategically suitable forward base to fly its U2 aircraft over Soviet Union, the ISI and CIA have worked closely with each other for many years. Working for US war in Afghanistan, provided an opportunity to ISI to renew its cold war links with the CIA. This relationship between ISI, CIA and the Saudi Intelligence Agency [Saudi General Intelligence Presidency (GIP)] got strengthened, as the war in Afghanistan wore on for over a decade (1978–1989). All three worked in tandem to recruit, organise, train, arm, finance and launch Jehadists from all over the world into Afghanistan, to fight the Soviet troops that supported the government of Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan, headed by Najibullah.

The ISI remained the hub around which the whole implementation of the strategy revolved. The ISI armed the Mujahideen fighting the Soviet forces in Afghanistan, conducted their training, provided them logistical support and oversaw their deployment in Afghanistan. To provide teeth and tactical assistance, troops of Pakistan's Special Services Group helped guide operations inside Afghanistan. Between 1983 and 1997, the ISI trained nearly 83,000 Afghan Mujahideen. It also trained about 25,000 fighters from 30 countries to fight this war. Nearly three billion dollars worth of arms were channeled to the Mujahideen through ISI.

Pakistan misappropriated huge funds by putting a substantial part of it to its own use and even siphoned off large quantity of arms to US's staunch enemy, Iran. Due to this reason, the ISI allowed CIA only limited freedom to get involved with the war in Afghanistan, as it had its own agenda to implement. As Yoseph Bodansky, the former Director of the US Congressional Task Force on 'Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare', wrote in *Bin Laden; The Man Who Declared War on America*, "The ISI, which supervised and controlled the Jehad being waged against Soviet Union in Afghanistan, kept the CIA out of the training camps for Mujahideen. This was because it was diverting 70 per cent of the arms and money Washington provided, to fundamentalist Islamist Mujahideen groups loyal to itself and hostile to the US and to train Jehadis for cross- border terrorist strikes in India."

It was during this decade that the ISI, first under Lieutenant General Akhtar Abdur Rehman (1980–87) and later under a virulent Islamist, Lieutenant General Hamid Gul (1987–89), became truly Islamist in its composition and ethos. In the eighties, ISI succeeded in checking the power and reach of four civilian governments that were formed between 1988–1999. It is an open secret that it was involved in the toppling of Benazir Bhutto's first government and creating difficult situations for all other civilian governments that came after her. It was Hamid Gul who got the nine Islamist right wing parties organised into a coalition, called Islami Jamhoori Ittehad to fight the 1990 elections against Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP). It is widely believed that these elections were rigged by the ISI under the instructions and supervision of Hamid Gul, to ensure Benazir Bhutto's defeat.

While the war against the Soviet Union was on, the Arab fighters, who had come to fight there as part of the Jehadi force organised by the ISI, CIA and GIP, began laying the foundation for the creation of Al Qaeda, under Osama Bin Laden. Pakistan, however, was focussed

on Hizb-e-Islami chief, Gullubdin Hikmatyar, to ensure it retained control over Afghanistan, after the Americans had left. It calculated that a friendly regime in Afghanistan, which would be subservient to Pakistan, would provide it the much sought after strategic depth vis a vis India, its traditional enemy in the east.

Soviet troops suffered unacceptable combat losses due to the coordinated and relentless operations conducted by the Mujahideen. Such losses, coupled with other developments at the international level, eventually resulted in the evacuation of Soviet forces from Afghanistan. This defeat of Soviet troops by CIA funded and Pakistan trained Mujahideen in Afghanistan, signalled the victory of Islamist ideology over Pashtun nationalism, which was largely secular and existed on both sides of the Durand Line.[36] This victory of Islamism soon made deep inroads into the conservative Pashtun tribal hinterland. The internecine conflict that broke out between various militant groups after the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan government had been toppled and Soviets had withdrawn from Afghanistan, defeated Pakistan's plans of installing its own puppet in Afghanistan. The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan might have removed the communist menace from its neighbourhood, but it did not necessarily bring in a pro-Pakistan regime there. Therefore, with Afghanistan embroiled in a self-destroying internecine war, Pakistan's hold over Afghanistan appeared tenuous. Pakistan felt that something had to be done.

This fresh thinking resulted in the creation of the Taliban, which literally means 'students'. Pakistan trained thousands of Taliban, a creation of ISI, CIA and the Quetta/Asia Transport Mafia,[37] in various camps established for the Afghan refugees in NWFP across Durand Line, and gradually inducted them into Afghanistan. Being better trained, more cohesive (they were mostly of Pashtun ethnicity) and well-supported by Pakistan, they soon brought the whole of Afghanistan under their control and defeated the fractious

parties that ruled Afghanistan under Burhanudin Rabbani, after the withdrawal of Soviet forces from there.

Pakistan made the best use of the American dependence on it to fight the latter's war in Afghanistan. Pakistan ensured that America turned a blind eye to its frenzied, though clandestine, attempts at manufacturing nuclear weapons, and succeeded in hiding the serious preparations Pakistan had put under way for fanning and sustaining insurgency in Kashmir. With its western flank secure under their firm ally, the Taliban, the ISI turned its undivided attention towards its north-east, sending hordes of Jehadis, now free from Afghanistan, into Kashmir. Equipping and arming these Jehadis with most modern and latest weapons did not pose any problems, as almost 70 per cent of the aid coming into Pakistan from US and its allies was diverted towards this new enterprise to grab Kashmir, code named 'Operation Topac'. Drawing encouragement from its grand success in Afghanistan, the stage was set for applying the same tactics in India, first in Punjab and then in Jammu and Kashmir. It was only in the fitness of things that the responsibility for the conduct of these covert operations in Kashmir, should devolve on the ISI, which began sending hordes of Islamist Jehadis from across the LoC into Kashmir.

In 1992, the US State Department threatened to place Pakistan on the watch-list of countries which were involved with exporting terror to other countries. Apparently, this forced Pakistan to appoint a new director general of ISI, Lieutenant General Javed Ashraf Qazi (1993–95), with the mandate to restructure the ISI. Qazi tried to put into effect the new mandate by changing a number of top-rung officers of the organisation. However, at the middle and lower levels, everything remained unchanged. In the end, nothing really changed. The reason primarily was that under no circumstances would Pakistan like to weaken its hold on Kabul, and therefore, it could not break free of those elements that it cultivated for that purpose.

Pakistan's involvement and tactics employed in fanning terrorism in Kashmir Valley have been aptly summed up by Ashely Tellis, Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Writing in *Pioneer* of July 10, 2010, he says, "Many Pakistanis today; academics, policy analysts, and even officials, concede that fomenting insurgencies within India has been a main component of Pakistan's national strategy. But that late admission comes long after Pakistan's military establishment moved to replace its failed strategy of encouraging insurgencies with the more lethal device of unleashing terrorism." He continues, "Flushed with confidence flowing from the success of the anti-Soviet Jehad in Afghanistan during 1980s, Pakistan sought to replicate in the east what it had managed in the west, namely, the defeat of great power larger than itself, using the same instruments as before — radical Islamist groups that had sprung up throughout Pakistan. Pakistan's ISI pushed into Jammu and Kashmir, for the first time in 1993, combat hardened aliens, tasked to inflict large-scale murder and mayhem."

General Pervez Musharraf's role as Chief of the Army Staff of Pakistan army, in Kargil war in 1999, was a direct result of his Kashmir-centric obsession, coupled with his risk-prone propensity, as an officer belonging to the elite Special Services Group (SSG). It must have been quite humbling for Musharraf to retreat from Kargil under the intense counter-offensive of Indian army and the pressure put on Pakistan by the international community, particularly by the US. Ironically, even though Kargil war was exclusively planned and executed by the army under General Musharraf, it was the elected Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharief, whom the Pakistanis held responsible for having bungled the enterprise. Once again it was the ISI that helped divert criticism from the army to the elected civilian government. It was, therefore, easy for General Pervez Musharraf to remove Nawaz Sharief and seize power in Pakistan. With Musharraf's coming to power in a bloodless coup, the ISI grew even bigger and

continued with its policy (of exporting terror) as far as India in general and Kashmir in particular was concerned. He himself acknowledged this and his own role while speaking to the German magazine, *Der Spiegal*, on October 5, 2010, a couple of days after launching his own political party, All Pakistan Muslim League, in London, where he is presently living in exile. He said, "They (underground militant groups to fight against India in Kashmir) were indeed formed. The (the Nawaz Sharief) government turned a blind eye because they wanted India to discuss Kashmir." The whole aim of this disclosure, as would be apparent, was to embarrass his bête noire, Nawaz Sharief, but in the process, he provided enough evidence of Pakistan's involvement in Kashmir, if any evidence was required.

Even more than two decades after the Pakistan-sponsored insurgency broke out in the valley, Pakistan's sustained involvement in fanning violence in the state continues to be intimate and persistent. Figures given in the following chart will make it clear:

Militants Killed in Jammu and Kashmir: 2008–09

Year	Total	Foreigners	Local	Percentage of Foreigners Killed
2008	237	171	66	72.15
2009	161	133	28	82.60

Source: Joginder Singh, a former Director of CBI quoted in *Pioneer*, October 18, 2010.

After the Twin-Towers of World Trade Centre in New York were attacked by Al Qaeda on September 11, 2001, Musharraf was left with no alternative but to (reluctantly) give up on Taliban under pressure from US, whose envoy even threatened him with bombing Pakistan into Stone Age, if Musharaff did not obey America. This resulted in Pakistan loosening its control over the militants that

it had cultivated for a generation, giving rise to the conflict of interests. On the one hand Pakistan was helping the US tackle Al Qaeda; on the other, it was supporting Taliban, involved in deadly combat with US troops in Afghanistan. In actual combat on the ground in Afghanistan, it was impossible to draw firm lines that separated different militant groups fighting the US forces. In order to demonstrate their autonomy of operations, some Pakistani militants carried out a bold but uncoordinated attack on Indian Parliament in December, 2001. This brought the two nuclear armed neighbours nearly to war. Under pressure, Musharraf withdrew assistance to Kashmir-centric militant groups. However, they were allowed to function under different names after sometime.

STRATSFOR[38] assessment of 2008 puts it in perspective, "While there are those within the ISI who see the militants as valuable tools of the state's foreign policy objectives, there are many others who "went native" and developed sympathies for these Islamist militants, even adopting the Islamist ideology of the people who were supposed to be their tools. The Pakistani military-intelligence complex was caught between the need to support the US war against the Jehadists and the need to cope with the rise of a hostile government in Afghanistan. On one hand, the ISI was helping Washington capture and kill Al Qaeda members; on the other, it was trying to maintain as much control as possible over the Taliban and other Islamist groups, which were enraged with Islamabad's decision to assist Washington. The ISI hoped its Kashmir operations would not be affected by the war against Islamist militants, but attacks on the Indian Parliament in December 2001, brought pressure from New Delhi. Musharraf was forced to ban many Kashmiri groups, which were subsequently allowed to re-invent themselves under different names."[39]

Pakistan ended up playing a double game that neither earned it the friendship of the Taliban nor the gratitude of the Americans. This double game did not go down well with those militant groups that

were very close to Al Qaeda. Such militant groups broke free from Pakistan's stranglehold and openly aligned themselves with Al Qaeda. For a while, some of these groups even functioned autonomously. However, many of them found it difficult to break free from the vice-like grip of the ISI. Eventually many of them were forced to return to the organisation. After two unsuccessful assassination attempts against Musharraf, he did make attempts to weed out some forces within the ISI that had grown autonomous, by removing certain high ranking officers. But for middle-level officers, who by now subscribed entirely to the Jehadist philosophy of the militants, it was business as usual.

Many militant groups, particularly the Taliban, turned hostile towards Pakistan, after Musharraf joined America in its war on terror. Under US pressure, Pakistan sent its troops into Waziristan area of FATA; an area that these militant groups considered as their exclusive preserve. This area had for decades enjoyed autonomy, with tribal 'elders' exercising control over various militant groups. When Pakistan army went after these groups, the tribal 'elders' lost control over them and in turn, their autonomy to function independently. One militant group, namely 'Pakistan Taliban' that emerged as a result of this policy was the direct result of this new policy of Pakistan. With US drones attacking the area in order to kill Al Qaeda cadres, the alienation grew even further. The collateral damage that such US attacks inflicted on civilian areas, killing a number of people, not directly connected with militancy, further fuelled the resentment among tribal people. This helped Pakistani Taliban increase their strength, enlarge their area of operation and consolidate their hold on the alienated people. Under Baitullah Mehsud's leadership, Pakistan Taliban grew bold and strong enough to hit at Pakistan army and ISI itself, in bigger and important cities of Pakistan. Pakistan Taliban's suicide missions, launched against selected targets underscored their reach and the level of subversion they were capable of causing to the

Pakistani institutions. Even though it started as a reluctant ally of US in its war on terror, Pakistan today has got embroiled in an existential war against the same Jehadists, whom it created in the first place. The ISI, therefore, is in catch-22 situation; running as it is with the hare and compelled by circumstances to hunt with the hound.

ISI Declares War on India

It is strange that Pakistan, which has never been well-disposed towards the Sikhs, should suddenly become the community's benefactor and patronise their cause of creating an independent state, the so called 'Khalistan'. Pakistanis have always projected Sikhs as nothing less than barbarians and have let go of no opportunity to heap ridicule on the whole community. It has not stopped at that. It has passed blasphemous and disparaging remarks about the universally and deeply venerated Sikh Gurus. In the early eighties, taking advantage of the political problems in Punjab, Pakistan changed its tactics of dealing with Sikhs, though its attitude did not undergo much change. It seized the opportunity provided by Operation Blue Star[40] to exploit the alienation of Sikh community from the government. ISI's craftily formulated plan included supply of sophisticated weapons and ammunition to the alienated Sikh youth and providing refuge to them after they had indulged in violent activity in India.

As situation in Punjab seemed to get out of hand and Government of India seemed unable to stem the rot, ISI enlarged the scope of the operation under code name 'Operation K-2'. The enlarged blueprint included training the alienated and misguided youth in the handling of sophisticated weapons and explosives, directing their operations inside and outside India, coordinating their activities with other terrorist groups and providing them with financial, moral and diplomatic support. ISI calculated the strategic benefits that would accrue to it, if Indian forces were kept occupied in Punjab, while their long-term objective of fomenting insurgency in Kashmir was

being given final touches. As US Task Force report dated February 1, 1993, titled *The New Islamic International* submitted to the House of Representatives states, "Pakistan's claim to Kashmir tempted ISI to sponsor and encourage creation of Khalistan. In its calculation it would make the Indian defence of Kashmir difficult. Islamabad was determined to exploit growing tension in Kashmir to destabilise India and, therefore, embarked on an ambitious plan of providing training and military assistance to Punjab militants."

Indira Gandhi's assassination in October 1984 gave further impetus to this terrorism and helped the ISI to establish the strategic value of subversion. By the middle of eighties, Pakistan had developed a vast and well-equipped training infrastructure for Afghan Mujahideen which the ISI now used for training first the Sikh youth and later Kashmiri militants. Dal Khalsa was among the first Sikh militant groups trained in the camps meant for training of Afghan Mujahideen. At times, this assistance was funnelled through Gulbudin Hikmatyar's Hizb-e-Islami to enable Pakistan to deny its direct involvement. In a raid on one of these camps by Soviet forces, a few Dal Khalsa recruits were killed and more importantly, highly incriminating documents were recovered from them. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation TV documentary, named *Fifth Estate* contains a chilling account of ISI's involvement with Punjab militants and bombing of Kanishka. Another documentary produced around the same time by the CNN also contains details about ISI's involvement with terrorism in Kashmir.

Not much is known of the organisational structure of ISI. With its headquarters located in Islamabad, ISI has on its rolls over 10,000 employees, including a large number of military officers and civilians. This figure does not include the informants and informal assets. Though on the face of it, the ISI is supposed to function under the joint chiefs of staff committee, it has over the years, become

nearly autonomous. With its mostly covert functioning beyond the purview of anyone, including the press, it has become the most powerful institution in the country, which is not answerable to anyone. Drug trafficking, hawala rackets and narcotic trade keep its coffers full. Financial resources built as a result, are used to execute the ongoing insurgency in Afghanistan and Jammu and Kashmir, besides running a huge network of various terrorist organisations. Till some years ago, its banking operations were entirely handled by Bank of Credit and Commerce International, before it was declared bankrupt. It is axiomatic that the organisation and functioning of intelligence agencies, the world over, is shrouded in secrecy. In that respect, ISI is no different. However, what is different about it is the fact that besides funding and training known terrorist organisations, it also exercises operational control over these. And to hide its own involvement; it covers their violent actions by calling them non-state actors, as in the case of Mumbai attacks (26 November 2008). According to information available, the ISI is organised into nine divisions as under:

1. **Joint Intelligence X (JIX):** It serves as a coordinating headquarter, providing administrative support to its various wings and organisations in the field. Its most important task is to prepare intelligence planning estimates and assess threat perceptions. It, along with the Joint Intelligence Bureau (JIB), is the biggest segment of the ISI, accounting for 60 per cent of its entire manpower.

2. **Joint Intelligence Bureau (JIB):** It is solely responsible for gathering political intelligence. One of the three sub-sections in which it is organised, is exclusively responsible for operations against India.

3. **Joint Counter Intelligence Bureau (JCIB):** Besides carrying out field surveillance of Pakistani diplomats posted abroad, it is responsible for carrying out intelligence operations in

West Asia, China, Afghanistan, South Asia and the southern Muslim republics of the erstwhile Soviet Union.

4. **Joint Intelligence Miscellaneous (JIM):** Conducts espionage activity in foreign countries.
5. **Joint Signal Intelligence Bureau (JSIB):** It has under it the signal organisation with wireless monitoring stations placed all along the border with India. This wing provides the signal communication support to militants operating in Jammu and Kashmir.
6. **Joint Intelligence Technical (JIT):** As the name suggests, its responsibility is to gather intelligence of technical nature.
7. **Explosive and Chemical Warfare (XCW) Section:** This section is exclusively devoted to evaluating and exploring the use of explosives and prepare for chemical warfare.
8. **Joint Intelligence North (JIN):** It is believed to have been responsible for carrying out operations in Jammu and Kashmir in the early years of insurgency there. This included intelligence gathering (military as well as political), infiltration, conduct and monitoring covert operations, propaganda and exfiltration. It is reported that this task has now been taken over by 'S' Wing (see below).
9. **'S' Wing:** Created sometime in late eighties, it has become the most secretive, sinister and powerful organ of ISI. Having grown in size and strength over the years, it has spread its tentacles far and wide. It is believed that the task of conducting operations in Afghanistan and Kashmir is handled by this wing, which is staffed in part, by retired Pakistani army veterans, most of them fanatical Islamists, handpicked by Zia-ul-Haque himself. The insurgency in Kashmir during the past two decades, is believed to have

> been handled entirely by this wing, which has on its rolls many terrorist commanders/leaders. Its biggest success was the grooming of Taliban, whom it unleashed with stunning success to capture power in Kabul in 1996. In addition to controlling its own home-grown terror outfits like LeT, Jaish-e-Mohammad and HUJI, etc., it also handles Al Qaeda and Taliban, thus in essence, serving as a single-point coordinating agency to run the entire terror machinery. It is responsible for creating and nurturing Jehadists for international operations.

Most of ISI's resources (financial, material and manpower) are directed towards running clandestine operations in Jammu and Kashmir, Afghanistan, and north-east India and, earlier in Punjab. The remaining parts of India and lately its own NWFP (now Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa) and FATA also consume a substantial portion of its budget. Its responsibilities include provision of weapons, training, logistics, intelligence, planning and execution of all militant operations wherever these are launched by them.

ISI's initial aim was to coordinate the inter-services intelligence. Then Ayub used it to retain army's control on Pakistan. Slowly, while not losing sight of the original objective, it turned its attention towards achieving strategic objectives against India. Later, post-Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, when the US lost interest in that country, ISI sent in own well-trained Taliban to fill the vacuum. Now, it is using terrorism as a state policy with much greater reach and efficacy. With ISI controlled at various levels by people whose ideological affinity to Islamist ideology is stronger than their loyalty to the hierarchal chain of command, it is difficult to foresee the end result. Pakistan army remains the most powerful institution and it has used the ISI to maintain its grip on the power structure in the country. In the process, it has become a law unto itself. The organisation did not even spare the iconic father of the Islamic bomb,

Dr AQ Khan. In a scathing attack on Pakistan's premier intelligence agency, Dr Khan wrote in a column in *The News*, "Unfortunately in our country, the performance of the intelligence agencies is anything but commendable and is nothing to be proud of. They have been an extended arm of dictators and have been widely branded as rogue organisations. These agencies operate outside the law, are least bothered about the judiciary and totally ignore court orders." Describing the ordeal he suffered at the hands of the ISI during Pervez Musharraf's regime, Dr Khan writes, "A General, an ISI Colonel and eight subordinates forcibly sent us to Bannigala and kept us there for 10 hours. During that time our house was totally ransacked. Bedrooms, clothes, books, files, etc., were searched and many things taken away; all this without any official warrant or court order to do so. In any civilised society such despicable acts are totally unacceptable and are dealt with severely by the courts." Under the circumstances, if army overhauls it, it stands to lose that control. No Pakistani army chief is likely to take that risk.

ISI's Involvement in Jammu and Kashmir

ISI's involvement in clandestine operations in Jammu and Kashmir goes back to many decades. In 1969, Jammu and Kashmir police unearthed a conspiracy to ignite religious and separatist passions in the valley when they arrested a number of students belonging to Al Fatah (named after the well-known Palestinian guerrilla group) from a house on in Barsoo, located on the banks of River Jhelum at Letpora. Further investigations revealed that the group was the creation of Pakistan's intelligence agencies (ISI had not attained the kind of profile that it was to acquire subsequently, and hence, was not a well-known entity then), directed to unify students for a struggle for secession. Essentially, the Al Fatah had been directed to target schools, colleges and university students to turn them into the mainstay of a proxy for future struggle. One of the serious protests attributed to Al Fatah was the violent agitation that broke out in the Valley in 1970.

The protestors were demanding removal of a book named *Book of Knowledge*, from the library of a college in Anantnag. The book was alleged to contain a picture of Prophet Mohammad (considered to be a blasphemous act in Islam). The protests came to an end when the book was proscribed by the Union Government; but by then, it had already accounted for four unfortunate deaths.

During the decade of 'Seventies', the political situation in the Valley remained largely peaceful. However, many political developments at the national and international level, impacted Kashmir's internal politics adversely. This helped Pakistan to foment trouble in the valley. Pakistan's ability to use the sway of radical Islam, which surfaced with deadly effect at many points on the globe during this decade, as a strategy to further its geo-political interests in South Asia, transformed the environment in the Valley, drastically. These developments infused fresh life into the anti-national and pro-Pakistan elements in Kashmir, who had been lying low for some time, as the breakup of Pakistan had dealt a serious blow to their morale. Militant revival of Islam helped raise the morale of Pakistan's proxies in Kashmir, who had always drawn ideological motivation from radical Islam. They now started organising themselves again to launch a movement, whose content and character, perhaps unknown to them, would be different.

As usual the Indian leadership and its intelligence agencies goofed up again and failed to notice the gathering storm, particularly when events in Punjab had made it amply clear that the storm in Kashmir was likely to burst any day, with an unheard of ferocity and violence. The insurgency in Punjab had created political turmoil in the whole of northern India. This adverse situation for India had greatly been created and further exploited by Pakistan to arm and train Kashmiri youth to unleash violence in the Valley. Political turbulence and uncertainty inside the Valley helped Pakistan in its effective intervention, besides projecting the outbreak of insurgency

as an indigenous movement launched by Kashmiris themselves. The Muslim leadership in the valley went along with the tide as the Indian State appeared politically adrift and its leadership, after the death of Indira Gandhi, indecisive.

In the meantime, a host of radical Islamic scholars in the garb of Maulvis and teachers of Madrassas were employed to indoctrinate Kashmiri youth. Islamic ideology served as the driving force of the militant violence that broke out in the valley in December, 1989; communal nature and fundamentalist world view being its chief characteristics. As a natural corollary, separation of Jammu and Kashmir from India became its immediate objective and turning the valley into a Muslim theocratic state in all its aspects, its long-term goal. This entailed fanning Islamic communalism by creating religious fervor against the *Kafir*, who was well identified and readily available, next door. Thus Kashmiri Pandits, pro-India Muslims and other non-Muslims became a natural target; totally unprotected, in hopeless minority, highly vulnerable, and abandoned by the secular Indian State.

Pakistan launched a virulent campaign against India, making use of electronic media, international press, its diplomatic corps and its strong proxies within the valley. The fundamentalist Muslim organisations like the Tabhligi Jammat, the JeI, Ahle Hadis and Salafists indulged in door to door campaigning to recruit new converts to their extremist ideology and consequently to Jehad. The Mullahs used the mosque and its pulpit to preach hatred against India and its supporters in Kashmir, the Kashmiri Pandits. According to their thinking, Kashmiri Pandit provided the support base for India in Kashmir and also served as its communication link. Wiping him out will serve a double purpose; on the one hand it will rid the valley of *Kafir*, turning it into a purely Islamic state, where *Nizam-e-Mustaffa* could then be enforced, and on the other, it would dry up Indian communication channels that would assist in the long run in

severing the State's links with India. For radical Islamists, there could not be a more noble cause!

In the initial phase of insurgency, Pakistan's electronic and print media went overboard in proclaiming the imaginary victories that the Mujahideen had scored over the Indian security forces. They went to town with repeated stories of heavy casualties inflicted on the security forces in so-called pitched battles. The local press, which depended for its survival on the patronage of the Valley's middle class, joined the tirade against India. It was a natural stand taken by the local press since for decades it had supported secessionism, Muslim fundamentalism and had advocated for Pakistan's involvement in finding a solution to Kashmir dispute.

Operation Topac

The operation to annex Jammu and Kashmir, code-named Operation Topac,[41] was formulated by ISI in 1988. Its main features were; fomenting insurgency in the state by activating its proxies, while simultaneously infiltrating well-trained and armed Jehadis. The name of the operation was derived from Prince Tupac Umru, who had led the war of liberation in Uruguay against the Spanish occupation in the 18th century. The responsibility for providing the highly motivated Jehadis for this operation was handed over to JeI and other like-minded religious parties, by Zia-ul-Haque. ISI rightly calculated the Western nations' preoccupation with Afghanistan, would provide adequate cover behind which Pakistan would embark on this ambitious mission without attracting international attention. Success of Operation Topac would certainly strengthen the military dictator politically, but the operation had another ulterior motive. This became apparent when Zia handed over the struggle to non-state actors. MJ Akbar writes, "It was not merely a shift from quasi-state actors to non-state actors, it also introduced a new element in the struggle, for the purpose was no longer limited to 'liberation' of

Kashmir from 'Hindu India' but included the conversion of Kashmir into 'Islamic space'. Jammait and Jammait-influenced fighters wanted a Kashmir cleansed of 'Hindu perfidy' and presence. In 1992, they were instrumental in driving Kashmiri Hindus out of the Valley."[42]

Initially, Pakistan made use of JKLF and its student wing, the Jammu and Kashmir Students Liberation Front, to foment trouble in the valley. It was a well thought out and deliberate move as the Front's slogan of 'Azadi' (Independence) touched a sympathetic chord among the general population and therefore, elicited greater acceptability and participation. Taking advantage of the simmering discontent among the people, the JKLF soon infiltrated every segment of Kashmiri society and the government apparatus, to subvert it from within. The ISI pumped in huge amounts of money and most modern and sophisticated weapons into the Valley. The first batch of JeI volunteer Jehadis, which included the son of *Amir* of the organisation, crossed over to PoK soon after the secret meeting between Zia and Said-ud-Taribilli, in 1982. They were trained in 'Khalid-bin-Walid', 'Abu Jindal' and 'Al Farooq' camps. A large number of Kashmiri youth that crossed the poorly guarded LoC subsequently, returned to become the first foot-soldiers of new war unleashed by Pakistan in the Valley.

From December 1989, an organised phase of assassinations, kidnappings, murders and looting started in Jammu and Kashmir. This was started by Amanullah Khan, Chairman of the JKLF, who announced an eighteen-month campaign of terror against India. With the Valley literally going up in flames, the insurgency to 'Liberate' Kashmir had truly begun. That it will prove most harmful to the Muslims of Kashmir itself was lost sight of by the Kashmiris, who saw it as a panacea for all their imagined ills. To the microscopic minority of Kashmiri Pandits, it brought death and destruction. It ended up in their being uprooted from Kashmir, their home for as long as history goes, only to be abandoned and forsaken as refugees.

Internationally too, the environment was favourable for Pakistan to succeed in its sinister designs. The decade between 1979 and 1989, saw the Soviet troops getting bogged down in the quagmire of Afghanistan and finally facing the ignominy of defeat, resulting in their withdrawal 1989. This setback hastened the Soviet Union's break-up, which eventually occurred in 1991. As a result, a large number of countries (many of them Islamic) became independent. Militant Islamic revolution swept away the Shah of Iran. Germany got re-united. Romania, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and many other countries broke free from the influence/control of the Soviet Union. As far as the ISI and other Islamic parties were concerned, it was the Islamist victories in Afghanistan and Iran that had far-reaching effect on their world view. Pakistan, having been chosen as a frontline state by the US was wallowing in the new-found status as America's closest ally in this part of the world. Such political 'high' in Pakistan coincided with the 'low' in India. India faced a difficult situation both internally and externally. The Soviet Union, India's external prop, was on the brink of break-up; political instability in India had resulted due to Indira Gandhi's assassination; with Central government perceived as weak, fissiparous tendencies in different regions was quite visible; Lastly, two of the strongest leaders dealing with Jammu and Kashmir, i.e., Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, were no longer available to address any emergency situation in Kashmir, as and when it arose. Pakistan rightly calculated that the time was opportune to annex Kashmir. The deteriorating political situation in the Valley made their dream look quite realistic.

Islamist victories in Iran and Afghanistan had radically Islamised the political discourse and its direction in Kashmir. Slogans emphasising the Islamic nature of the movement and advocating the establishment of an Islamic state in Jammu and Kashmir had become routine in view of their popular appeal. JeI and those who

drew inspiration from Khomeini's revolution, were in the forefront of carrying out Islamic indoctrination of the people, particularly in the rural areas. The former, along with the Al-Jehad, had attained wide acceptability among the common people. By 1984, the society had been considerably radicalised to allow Kashmir Liberation Front (KLF), Mahaz-e-Azadi, etc., to grow rapidly. In a short span of time, these parties were able to convince the people that their salvation lay in Islamic revolution and that alone was the way to achieve liberation of Jammu and Kashmir. This resulted in marked erosion of the secular ethos in Kashmir, and its giving way to a fundamentalist Muslim identity. Having done their home work properly, it was easy for ISI to give a pan-Islamic identity and extra-territorial dimension to the developments in Kashmir. The extent of Pakistan's involvement in Kashmir was deep and extensive. According to intelligence agencies and former militants, around 25,000 Kashmiri youth were trained in the camps established by Pakistan in PoK, and other places in the first couple of years between 1989 and 1991.

The insurgency in Kashmir was initiated and executed in a classical Maoist style that only a professional organisation could undertake. In 1987–89, which marked the first phase of this insurgency, the ISI created a nucleus of Islamic militancy by seeding and exploiting discontent among the people. This phase was characterised by sporadic bomb blasts and stray cases of targeting soft targets, particularly Kashmiri Pandits. Only those cadres were deployed, who had been provided rudimentary training and were, therefore, expendable. Adopting uncoordinated hit and run tactics that avoided direct confrontation with the security forces, was the essential operational feature of this phase. It is now a well-established fact that a few officers from the SSG of Pakistan's elite force had been inducted during this important phase to coordinate and control the operations in Kashmir. As it happened in 1947 and 1965, the Government of India either chose to ignore the warnings or was

totally incapable of dealing with the situation. Differences within its own ranks on the methodology to be adopted to deal with the situation were aired publicly. This further aggravated the situation and emboldened the militants and their masters from across the border. Had the government shown the necessary resolve to deal with the situation, it would have succeeded in nipping the dangerous situation in the bud. Such a stand by India would have compelled the ISI to re-think. But the government's abdicating its responsibilities, led the ISI to embark upon initiating the second phase in the middle of 1991.

Assassination of Mirwaiz Maulvi Farooq provided the required environment for garnering active public support for the second phase, which was characterised by coordinated armed actions. A special force, whose ranks were drawn from those who had fought in Afghanistan and officered by mainly Punjabis from Pakistan, was inducted in the valley around July 1991, to form the mainstay of this phase. This force was highly motivated and undertook daring operations. In keeping with the laid down principles in the insurgency manual, many agent provocateurs freely mixed with the government functionaries to arouse least suspicion. These agent provocateurs formed the backbone of later day OGW (Over Ground Workers)[43]. They did not hesitate to operate in police and military uniforms to carry out their operation as and when the tactical situation so demanded. One of the most effective modus operandi adopted by them was to create resentment among the general population against the security forces by committing terror acts in the garb of security forces and ensure that public anger, which resulted as a consequence, was directed against the latter. Till 1992, Pakistan ensured that JKLF, led by the Pakistan-based Amanullah Khan, remained its favourite tool to foment and spread militancy in the Valley. While at the same time Pakistan ensured that it did not become too strong, as its slogan of 'Azadi'

did not suit its long-term interests. Once JKLF had served its purpose, Pakistan dumped it.

Thereafter, in keeping with its objective, it switched its support to other, more radical militant groups like Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM), Allah Tigers, Al Omar, Al Barq, Muslim Brotherhood, etc. Whereas JKLF talked too loudly of Kashmir's independence, the HM cadres sought Kashmir's merger with Pakistan and imposing Sharia on the Kashmiri people. During this period the ISI created a plethora of militant organisations after JKLF had been successfully used by it to create the initial wave of unrest, which now became self-sustaining. Amanullah Khan acknowledged as much in his interview to Urdu daily *Jang* in 1991, when he said that he had set off the *Azadi* movement in Kashmir in 1988, by blasting three bombs in Srinagar. He further mentioned that later, Pakistan army chose pro-Pakistan Islamic extremists to take over the movement. It was a well-known fact that between 1990–1993, there were almost 100 militant organisations with unheard of names, which let loose a reign of terror in the Valley to create panic and chaos in order to project the government as ineffective. In fact, says Capt SK Tikoo (Retd), "To be precise, there were 176 militant organisations, some of these comprising of just two or three militants. In 1993, two militants got killed in Gurguri Mohalla, Srinagar, when the bag of explosives they were carrying on their bicycle exploded. That was the end of that militant organisation, because it comprised just the two of them." By this time the radicalisation of Kashmiri society had reached such a level that the infamous Mast Gul who torched the revered shrine of Nund Rishi at Tsarar-e-Sharif was eulogised as a hero in the following verse, sung in his praise:

Tsarar bani hari hari
Masṭ Gul kati bani

(The Shrine at Tsrar can be built brick by brick (bit by bit); where shall we get Mast Gul from?)

It is true that a large number of Muslims resented this sacrilege, but as usual, they remained silent.

By 1992, the ISI established a common command over all the militant organisations, many of whom it had itself created and some, which had mushroomed during the first phase, as a natural consequence. For example, in the fall of 1991, it brought together HM, Allah Tigers and Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen, in order to launch joint and coordinated operations. Such coordination helped the ISI to smoothen its operations of funnelling arms, ammunition and funds to the militants. It also helped it to conduct more advanced training programmes and produce more hardened and better motivated cadres for induction into the valley, well-versed in the handling of far more sophisticated arms, ammunition, explosives and communication equipment. This period also saw the taking over of the complete command and control of HM by Syed Sallah-ud-Din who now became its *Amir* and was designated as the Supreme Commander. He quickly widened the base of his outfit in the entire valley by eliminating his competitors like JKLF, Al Barq and Al Jehad. He was also responsible for extending the insurgency into Doda and Udhampur districts of Jammu Division. In Febuary, 1995, he shifted his base to Muzafarabad, from where he has been operating as the Supreme Commander of the 'United Jehad Council,' ever since.

Geelani and Sallah-ud-Din; Pakistan's most Loyal Foot-soldiers in Kashmir

Mohammad Yusuf Shah was born at Soibug in Budgam district in December 1946. His father, Ghulam Rasool Shah, was an illiterate farmer, though his maternal grand-father, Gulla Sahib, was a respected religious figure. Gulla Sahib took keen interest in the upbringing of Mohammad Yusuf Shah and in moulding his personality. Mohammad Yusuf Shah did his schooling from

Government Middle School, Soibug (now Government High School). Though he did well in academics, his main interest centered around playing 'Kabadi' and hunting water-fowl at the nearby world famous Hokersar bird-sanctuary. Later, he shifted to Government Higher Secondary School, Budgam, from where he passed his secondary school examination in 'First Division'. However, he failed to get admission into the Government Medical College at Srinagar. It was during his stay at Budgam that he came increasingly under the influence of an influential teacher, Ghulam Nabi Nissar, who introduced him to radical Islam. Meanwhile, while he was only 14, he had been married to Taja, daughter of a retired school teacher. He had seven children from her; five sons and two daughters.

After clearing his higher secondary examination, Yusuf went to Sri Pratap College in Srinagar, from where he did his graduation. In 1971, he did his masters from Kashmir University in political science. In the same year, he became chief election agent of Mirza Afzal Beg's brother, Mirza Ghulam Hassan Beg, during the latter's election from Budgam constituency. Around the same period, Yusuf took up a job of a science teacher in JeI-run school at Nawab Bazar, in Srinagar. In 1972, he was appointed as *Amir-e-Tehsil* of JeI in Budgam and later as *Naazm-e-Aala,* chief of the party's student wing, Islami Jamiat-e-Tulba. In 1972, he was arrested for the first time during *Panchayat* elections. After working in JeI at various levels, Yusuf Shah was appointed as the *Amir* of Srinagar district. In 1987 assembly elections, Mohammad Yusuf Shah got the mandate for fighting the election as the candidate of JeI, which was one of the main components of MUF (p. 351), from Amira Kadal constituency. Pioneers of militancy in Kashmir and the founders of JKLF were all his campaign managers. They were Yaseen Malik, Javed Mir, Ashfaq Majeed, Abdul Hameed Sheikh and Aijaz Dar. His opponent in the election was Ghulam Mohiudin Shah of NC and a relative of Farooq Abdullah. It was widely believed that Mohammad Yusuf Shah had

won the election but his opponent was declared the winner. The complete account is given at page 350. Mohammad Yusuf Shah was subsequently imprisoned for nine months, during which he transformed into a hardcore radical, willing to take up arms.

By the end of 1989, and early 1990 (period coinciding with the outbreak of violence against Pandits), Geelani found in Mohammad Yousuf Shah (an important JeI leader by then), a young and fire-spewing hardliner, who would be willing to do the former's bidding. Geelani, therefore, set himself on course to mentor Shah.

Syed Ali Shah Geelani, a known hardliner has, for decades, been the face of anti-Indian politics in Jammu and Kashmir. A votary of the merger of the state with Pakistan, Geelani has shown tremendous resilience in remaining politically relevant in Kashmir. He has managed to call shots when many a stalwart fell by the way side during the last two decades of unprecedented violence in Kashmir. As the unquestioned supremo of JeI, he had a readymade platform and a virulent anti-India organisation. JeI, with its communal outlook was used by Geelani to fan hatred against Pandits. He turned its dedicated cadres into armed Jehadis at the behest of his benefactors living across the LoC. His objective was to create an armed wing totally under his own control that would be in the vanguard of Islamising Kashmir.

A meeting to strategize this was held in the house of Dr Sultan Mohammad, a JeI activist, who too had been a candidate in the 1987 assembly elections. This meeting held on August 3, 1989, in Soibug village of Badgam district, under the chairmanship of Syed Ali Shah Geelani, was attended by top JeI leaders and militant commanders of the upcoming armed uprising. These included Ghulam Mohammad Mir, alias Shams-ul-Haque, Mohammad Ismail, Ashraf Dar and Maqbool Illahi. In the early part of armed uprising in 1989, Ashraf Dar had already attained some prominence among the armed cadres of militants as the *baani* (founder) militant. Similarly, Maqbool Illahi was known as the *asli* (real) militant because of his actual

participation in small armed actions. In his opening remarks during the meeting, Geelani told the audience that time was ripe for launching a full-fledged armed struggle. He, therefore, announced that JeI would give complete support to such an armed struggle. At this, Ashraf Dar proposed that militant organisation, 'Zia Tigers' be given the responsibility of carrying out the armed uprising. This was agreed to by Geelani, who in due course, persuaded the *Majlis-e-Shoora* to release funds required to start and sustain militancy in the valley. As a result, Ashraf Dar, as the chief of 'Zia Tigers,' started sending its cadres across the LoC for receiving arms and arms training.

While all this was going on, many other militant outfits like JKLF, 'Allah Tigers, etc, had already emerged as the pioneers of the armed uprising. However, Geelani was disturbed by the fact that some of these militant outfits were advocating *Azadi* (independence) for the state. This advocacy went against Geelani's avowed aim of seeking the merger of the state with Pakistan. However, what came as a shock to Geelani was the advocacy of *Azadi* even by 'Zia Tigers', led by Ashraf Dar. Not the one to brook any disobedience of his diktat, Geelani struck immediately by creating a new outfit by the name of Hizbul Mujahideen. Master Ahsan Dar, who presented its constitution, subsequently rose to be its supreme commander. JeI of Jammu and Kashmir and in PoK now recognised only HM as the real armed wing of the party and provided it with all the necessary support.

In the meanwhile, many other militant organisations, which did not subscribe to the philosophy of Geelani's JeI, too were getting stronger by the day. Geelani saw it as a threat to his own standing. To nip the dissidence that was raising its head, he called a meeting of important functionaries of his party, as also of his militant wing, the HM, under the chairmanship of Master Ahsan Dar. The meeting was held in the house of a well-known JeI leader, Abdul Gani Sofi, alias Shaheen, at Sepdan village in Badgam district. The

meeting, among others, was attended by Mohammad Yusuf Shah, Mohammad Abdullah, alias, Commander and Ghulam Mohammad Ganai. During the meeting, Geelani ordered the HM commanders to disarm all cadres of rival militant groups. He, in fact, went so far as to order their physical elimination, if they did not agree to work under HM. These orders were, however, strongly opposed by Ghulam Mohammad Ganai and Mohammad Abdullah. But Geelani would have none of it. He immediately stripped Master Ahsan Dar of the title of supreme commander and nominated Mohammad Yusuf Shah in his place, with a pseudonym, Syed Sallah-ud-Din. To placate Ahsan Dar, he was nominated as the military advisor; a purely decorative title.

Having felt slighted, it did not take Ahsan Dar long to hit back. He announced publically that HM was a militant outfit of JeI. It was the first time that such an important public disclosure had been made by any prominent insider. At the same time, Mohammad Abdullah, alias, Commander also walked out of HM. Feeling threatened, Syed Sallah-ud-Din, under Geelani's orders and with vast resources at his disposal, started poaching on other smaller militant groups and succeeded in merging them into HM. This method was greatly resented by a senior and respected member of JeI, Ghulam Mohammad Ganai. However, on Geelani's orders, he was shot dead by HM cadres while coming out of the mosque after offering evening prayers in his native village, Seeri, in Pattan district of Kashmir, sometime in 1992.

Sometime later, Geelani announced the formation of Hurriyat Conference, an oufit that co-opted, besides JeI, 22 other smaller groups/political parties; all opposed to India (some of these are listed at Appendix 'B'). It is widely believed that the formation of Hurriyat Conference was greatly facilitated by US Under Secretary of State, Robin Raphael, to further her own anti-India agenda in Kashmir. Geelani, as the president of this outfit, ensured that many hardline members of his party occupied key posts in it. These included

Mohammad Akbar Bhatt, Zaffar-ul-Islam (divisional commander of HM) and Geelani's chief confidant, Sadiq Ali.

Geelani soon started facing opposition from those who were roughing it out in the field and resented being ordered around by those sitting in the safe havens of carpeted bungalows. Eventually, it resulted in the virtual split in HM; with one faction headed by Ahsan Dar and the other by Syed Sallah-ud-din. One time comrades in arms were now locked in an internecine war to gain an upper hand in the ongoing militancy in Kashmir. Orders issued by Geelani to Sallah-ud-Din were quite categorical, "Eliminate all those who oppose us." In this ongoing war, Ahsan Dar suffered grievous losses when a well-concealed hide out of his came under grenade attack from Sallah-ud-Din's men. The hideout was located in the house of Rashid Zain-i-Gami, a wealthy and influential supporter of Ahsan Dar. In this well-planned attack, Rashid Zain-i-Gami and two of Ahsan Dar's *baani* militants were killed. It was a great setback to Ahsan Dar's faction of HM in its open war against Syed Sallah-ud-Din. This and other killings of Ahsan Dar's cadres over a period of time, with the active support of Pakistan, enabled Geelani to become the unchallenged godfather of HM, with Syed Sallah-ud-Din as its operational commander. Besides, being totally driven by the Islamic concept of Jehad and openly fighting for Kashmir's accession to Pakistan, HM soon became the preferred militant organisation of Pakistan in the valley. It now received enormous assistance in terms of modern arms, ammunition, training, funds and other support from Pakistan. In Geelani and Sallah-ud-Din Pakistan found willing tools to help them achieve their objectives in the Valley.

Later, in 1994, Students Liberation Front emerged as a popular organisation in the valley. Geelani saw in it a challenge to his own supremacy and hence ordered the elimination of its leader, Kukka Parrey. However, despite numerous attempts, Sallah-ud-Din failed to deliver. This resulted in open war between HM and Kukka Parrey's

cadres, who stood their ground despite the former's greater strength. But the increasing attacks on Kukka Parrey's men drove them towards seeking support of the army, who too were getting increasingly targeted by the HM. However, HM continued to target Kukka Parrey, as he was proving to be a charismatic leader, gaining strength with every passing day. In one such attempt, a deep conspiracy was hatched during a meeting in the house of Ghulam Hassan Khan, a senior JeI leader in Vachi village, in South Kashmir. During the meeting, attended by 40–50 armed commanders of HM, Ghulam Qadir Ganai, a senior JeI leader, sent an emissary to summon senior NC leader-turned-militant, Abdul Qayoom Shah, to the meeting. Shah, on reaching the venue, was taken aback on seeing the who's who of the HM in the meeting. The reason for his being summoned became clear soon enough. He was offered ₹ 50,00,000 to surrender to army, earn their confidence and at an opportune moment, kill Kukka Parrey. However, the plan fizzled out even before its first phase could be completed.

By now, Kukka Parrey had become a formidable rival of HM, with the proverbial nine lives of a cat. He achieved the status of a folk hero who was trying to preserve Kashmir's ethos based on moderate Islam, which the HM, on orders of Pakistan and under the guidance of Geelani, were out to destroy. Under the cicumstances Pakistan became desperate to get Kukka Parrey eliminated. It ordered the HM to kill Kukka Parrey under all circumstances. A new plan which was formulated as a result, envisaged a small but dedicated team of HM militants surrendering their arms to police/army and commence work as over-ground workers (OGW) of HM. The group included Abdul Majid Hajam, Mohammad Ashraf Hajam, company commander Tuffail and his brother, Zafar-ul-Islam. However, even this attempt failed, as they turned renegades and in fact, started working for Kukka Parrey and against Sallah-ud-Din and Geelani. When Geelani learnt about it, he got infuriated to such an extent that he got Hajam burnt alive in

a brick kiln, to send a frightening message to any more prospective 'renegades'.

By now, with Pakistan's blessings, Geelani had achieved complete financial, administrative and operational control over the HM. He was also made responsible for overseeing its operational performance. He would even appoint platoon commanders, not to speak of appointing 'regional' and 'divisional' commanders; appointments which were filled by his chosen protégés.

As Kukka Parrey's popularity and power grew, Sallah-ud-Din himself came under increasing threat of Kukka Parrey's cadres. To escape Kukka Parrey's wrath, Sallah-ud-Din was deputed to Doda region across Pir Panjal, to ostensibly lay the foundations of militancy there. With the help of Pakistan-based militant outfit, the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), Sallah-ud-Din was able to create a nucleus of militants in that region. But Kashmir continued to be unsafe for him, as Kukka Parrey's men were increasingly targeting HM cadres. Therefore, Pakistan considered it prudent to get him across into PoK. Once there; he was made the chairman of the newly created United Jehad Council that was meant to oversee and coordinate the functioning of all the militant organisations in Kashmir, under the overall supervision of ISI. Ever since, Sallah-ud-Din has continued to stay there.

Post-9/11, Geelani slowly lost support within Hurriyat and was shown the door. But being used to unquestioned obedience of his orders and with Pakistan firmly behind him (post-Musharaff), Geelani floated his own outfit, *Tehreek-i-Hurriyat* in 2004, with himself as its chairman. What this party stands for is clearly spelt out by him, and I quote Capt SK Tikoo (Retd), "The *Dastoor* (Constitution) of *Tehrik-i-Hurriyat,* right in its preamble, incites, instigates and provokes its members to eliminate all non-believers in the name of Islam, and thus complete the unfinished task of the Prophet. Just read what is

written in the very first chapter (there are three chapters in all) of the *Dastoor* (pages 4 and 5) '...Those who are not accepting the fact that all creation flows from the dispensation of the one God, those that insist that they will bow to the God of their choosing and base their culture and civilisation on the philosophies and points of view of their liking, are hereby told unequivocally that the Messenger of God has not been sent to accommodate them, but has been sent to impose the instructions of (the one) God that he brings on every aspect of creation. This (the will of God) has to be carried out by him in whatever manner required. You should leave no stone un-turned to condemn/admonish/lash out at the apostate/polytheist and the dis-believer to accept this; he may try howsoever hard (towards the controversy), this mission of the Messenger will stand accomplished."[44]

In a booklet issued by *Tehrik-i-Hurriyat, 'Teen Hadaf'* (Three aims), Geelani preaches openly for the creation of Ummah sans any geographical boundaries and different governments, but just one *Khilafat*. No other Kashmiri has so openly and brazenly preached hatred against non-Muslims and called for their physical elimination as Geelani has done.

By the time the second phase of militancy was launched, fear and terror had gripped the entire valley. The political leadership was so demoralised by targeted killings that they either went underground or publically renounced their political affiliations. Similar was the case with police and bureaucracy. Liquor shops, bars, clubs, video and beauty parlors, cinema halls, etc., were looted, destroyed or bombed, as being un-Islamic. Efforts were made to enforce a strict Islamic code of conduct. A large number of government and privately run schools were burnt to make way for opening up of JeI run schools. Elimination of large number of intelligence agency personnel, particularly Kashmiri Pandits, was another effective tactics used to achieve the initial aim. This phase also saw the takeover of all mosques by radical mullahs.

Irrespective of the type of political dispensation that rules Pakistan, it will always be its army that will continue to call the shots. Pakistan army has not reconciled itself with the status quo on Kashmir and its comprehensive defeat at the hands of Indian army in 1971 war, led it to start a proxy war against India in Kashmir; a war that was low cost, but effective. Zia's Islamisation drive created a generation of Jehadis willing to fight this proxy war and provide a regular supply of Jehadi reinforcements. Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the defeat of Soviet forces there, convinced Pakistan's powerful army and the radical Islamist leaders that their well-motivated Jehadis would be able to repeat their victory against the Soviet Union, against India too. International events in the eighties too played a significant role in helping Pakistani leadership to embark on this dangerous mission, called 'Operation Topac.' Unfortunately for Pandits, they became its first victims.

Notes

1. *Pioneer*, July 26, 2010.
2. *Jammu and Kashmir Always an Integral Part of India*, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India Publication (Tara Art Printers, New Delhi, 1996).
3. LK Advani, *My Country My Life*, (New Delhi: Roopa and Company, 2008).
4. Josef Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir*, (Oxford University Press, 1952).
5. Op.cit,, n. 1.
6. Ibid.
7. Nadeem F Pracha: *Dawn*. Reproduced in *Pioneer* January 27, 2010.
8. *Pioneer:* February 12, 2011.
9. MSM Sharma, *Peeps into Pakistan*, (Pustak Bhandar, 1954). p 135.
10. This is recorded in the *Time* Magazine of December, 23, 1996. The Magazine attributes this statement to Jinnah's doctor who was attending on him at his death bed.
11. Din Mohammad was among the first to inform Indian Army about the presence of infiltrators in general area surrounding Gulmarg and acted as a guide to their hideouts. Government of India later conferred one of its highest civilian awards, Padma Shri, on him. He achieved some kind of a celebrity status. However, when insurgency broke out in Kashmir in 1990, he was among the first to be shot dead by the militants.
12. Contained in PN Dhar's article in a leading daily of April 4, 1995. Here it is quoted by Jagmohan in a newspaper article.
13. Arif Mohammad Khan, *The Times of India*, December 27, 2008.

14. Article on the website of prestigious Pakistani paper, *Dawn;* quoted in *Pioneer*, December 17, 2010.
15. Arif Mohammad Khan, n. 13.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. *The Times of India*: November 10, 2011.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. *Pioneer*: November 10, 2011.
22. Newsline, Wednesday, November 4, 2009.
23. Ibid.
24. Arif Mohammad Khan, *The Times of India,* November 10, 2008.
25. Ibid.
26. Samuel Baid, *Pioneer*, March 8, 2009.
27. *Sunday Times of India*, March 8, 2009.
28. *Newsline*, n. 22.
29. Hussein Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military,* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005).
30. n. 27.
31. n. 22.
32. MJ Akbar quotes Arif Jamal in his book, *Tinder Box - The Past and Future Pakistan,* excerpted in *The Times of India,* January, 9, 2011.
33. Ibid.
34. Awami League, led by the charismatic Bengali leader, Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman, had its entire support base in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).
35. *The Times of India,* December 6, 2010 and *Pioneer*, December 7, 2010.
36. The boundary line, delineating the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan is known as 'Durand Line'. While Pakistan recognises it as such, Afghanistan does not. This has been a constant source of friction between the two Islamic neighbours.
37. A Pathan-dominated mafia that thrives on the smuggling and narcotic trade between Pakistan and many countries of Central Asia.
38. It is a US based private global intelligence organisation, staffed by former intelligence officials, whose highly informed analysis of world events enjoys a high degree of credibility among various governments and experts, dealing with strategic affairs.
39. STRATSFOR assessment, dated August 11, 2008: downloaded from Kashmir-Interchange@googlegroups.com, on November 20, 2010.
40. 'Operation Blue Star' was launched on June 6, 1984, by the Indian Army against Sikh terrorists who had turned the most revered shrine of the Sikhs, the Golden Temple at Amritsar, into a fortress. Though the operation destroyed most of the terrorist leaders, it also inflamed Sikh passions due to the extensive damage caused to the Golden Temple. The operation finally cost Indira Gandhi her life, when she was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards, a few months later.
41. Though Operation Topac was dismissed as fictitious by various intelligence agencies,

the build-up to and outbreak of armed uprising in Kashmir in 1989 bore an uncanny resemblance to what was outlined in the said operation.

42. MJ Akbar: *The Times of India:* January 9, 2011.
43. 'Over Ground Workers' did not openly carry arms, nor did they indulge in violence. They would rarely be targeted by security forces. This permitted them to propagate the militant ideology openly and act as the latter's conduits and carry out liaison on their behalf, etc.
44. Capt SK Tikoo (retd) in *Sahara Times,* July 24, 2010.

13

PANDITS TARGETED

It has happened and it goes on happening; and will happen again if nothing happens to stop it. The innocent know nothing because they are too innocent. The poor do not notice because they are too poor. And the rich do not notice because they are too rich. The stupid shrug their shoulders because they are too stupid. And the clever shrug their shoulders because they are too clever. The young do not care because they are too young. And the old do not care because they are too old. That is why nothing happens to stop it. And that is why it has happened and goes on happening and will happen again. —*Erich Fried*[1]

Exodus of Pandits: Historical Perspective

A cursory study of the history of Kashmir in general and history of Kashmiri Pandits in particular, reveals that forced exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir in 1989–90, was their seventh mass exodus from the valley to escape persecution at the hands of rabid Islamists. Ever since the arrival of Islam in Kashmir in the fourteenth century, persecution and forced conversions of Kashmiri Hindus has been a regular phenomenon. To escape this fate, they would seek the safety of the plains of India, where they felt physically secure. It resulted in a progressive drop in their population in the valley. All these forced exodus were invariably characterised by

a number of similarities in the methods adopted by the majority Muslim community of Kashmir in enforcing this exodus. These included systematic oppression, desecration of places of worship, threat and use of violence, forced conversions and selective killings of Kashmiri Pandits. On few occasions, the Pandits did offer some limited resistance, but this was broken with a heavy hand and was followed by violent reprisals and even greater repression. This left the Pandits with no option but to move out en masse, leaving behind all their possessions, including movable as well as immovable assets. In the face of such onslaughts, their only concern was ensuring their physical survival and their resolve of not converting to Islam, a choice they were offered, but which most of them refused.

History bears witness to the fact that only once did the reverse exodus occur. That was during the reign of Zain-ul-Abadin (1420–1470; chapter 2), who asked the Kashmiri Hindus to return to their native place. Large number of them heeded his advice and returned to the valley. Zain-ul-Abadin ruled for nearly 50 years and Kashmiri Hindus got respite during this period. Other than this exception, the exodus have been irreversible, resulting in the exodus of the aborigines of the Valley for good. Prior to their latest exodus in 1989–1990, Kashmiri Pandits had been forced out during the Afghan rule in the valley (1753–1819). However, thereafter, till 1947, first during Sikh rule (1819–1846), and then during major portion of the Dogra rule (1846–1947), they did not face any persecution. In the twentieth century, the old story repeated itself in July 1931, during Sheikh Abdullah's movement against the Dogra Maharaja of the State. In the large-scale violence directed against Kashmiri Pandits on July 13, 1931, many of their properties were destroyed and some were even killed. Kashmiri Pandits became the victims of this violence despite the fact that Kashmiri Muslims were protesting against the Dogra Maharaja and not Kashmiri Pandits. It was ironic, because Dogra rulers had not particularly favoured the

Pandits for recruitment into government service. Feeling threatened, neglected and vulnerable after the riots, they moved out to other cities of India. "Some 30,000 to 40,000 families are said to have moved out of Kashmir in the decade between 1931–41," writes a distinguished diplomat and India's former Foreign Secretary, MK Rasgotra, in the *Indian Express* of August, 26, 1995.

Official census figures for 1941 say that Kashmiri Pandits formed 15 per cent of the population of Kashmir, as against 83 per cent Muslims. However, these figures were wide off the mark. It was a well-known fact that those who conducted the censuses during the Dogra rule, were invariably junior Muslim officials, notorious for describing Kashmiri Pandit families as Muslim households. Actual population of Kashmiri Pandits in 1941 must have been close to 25–30 per cent of the total population. Indeed, the census of 1941 was the first statistical assault on the Kashmiri Pandits in the valley; an ingenious ploy among other methods, used to reduce Kashmiri Pandits to non-entities.

With India gaining independence in 1947, and Jammu and Kashmir opting to be part of India, Kashmiri Pandits felt that their travails were finally over. They felt that being now a part of the great Indian state that was democratic and secular, their future would be safeguarded. They felt that Indian independence will usher in a new era for Kashmiri Pandits. Alas! It proved to be a vain hope, as they remained as vulnerable as ever to the whims and fancies of Muslim majoritarianism. The State's accession to India did little to improve the fortunes of about a million Kashmiri Pandits living in Kashmir at that time. Along with backward and marginalised communities like Gujjars, Bakerwals and others, they rarely enjoyed the fruits of billions of rupees of development funds that India poured into Kashmir after independence.

In the meantime, the old method of employing statistical assault

on Kashmiri Pandit population in Kashmir continued; the figures quoted by the state administration about the number of Kashmiri Pandits left in the valley after the 1947 Pakistani invasion of Kashmir, was between 80,000 and 120,000. This was way below the actual number quoted above. At the time of this invasion, some families had left the valley, but most had returned after the Pakistanis were pushed out and normalcy was restored.

The whole aim of under-representing the Kashmiri Pandit population was to deny them their due share in the state legislature and in the government jobs. This denial extended to their being marginalised politically too, by altering the electoral boundaries of some Pandit dominated areas in Srinagar, Anantnag and other places. This was done to ensure that they would not be able to elect a candidate of their choice from those constituencies, where they lived in substantial numbers. This way the administration ensured that one (never more than one) Kashmiri Pandit got elected to the state legislature, that too only with the support of Muslim votes. The census figures of 1981 put the Muslim population in the valley at 95 per cent, up from 83 per cent in 1941; whereas the corresponding Kashmiri Pandits population, placed at 124,000, was down to 5 per cent from 15 per cent, during the same period. The false figures quoted by the so-called secular government stood exposed in 1989–90, when the number of Kashmiri Pandits who fled the valley was placed at over 450,000. Nearly 300,000 of them were housed in refugee camps in Jammu, Delhi and elsewhere; 100,000 found place with relatives in various places in India; around 50,000 were still left in the valley before the end of 1990. Thereafter, the 1991 census put the Pandits at 0.1 per cent of the population, which would translate to barely 3,000 people.

During all this time the Kashmiri Pandits were getting marginalised economically too. One of the first acts of Sheikh Abdullah after coming to power was to enact the 'Jammu and

Kashmir Land Estates Abolition Act'. Though its ostensible purpose was to improve the lot of landless tillers, the exercise was primarily undertaken to take away the lands belonging to Kashmiri Pandits and hand these over to Muslims. Hindus, especially in rural areas, whose only source of sustenance was their land, were turned into beggars overnight, once their lands were taken away from them without being paid any compensation, as promised (Chapter 10). To complete their marginalisation, the next set of legislation brought in by Syed Mir Qasim in the form of 'Reformatory Law of the Agrarian Reforms Act, 1971,' further sealed their economic fate. The Act was so designed that a Pandit could own nothing other than a house in his village.

The discrimination was extended to many other areas, chief among these being the discrimination meted out to Kashmiri Pandits in providing them with government jobs. At that time, private sector was virtually non-existent, making government the sole job-provider. Prof KL Bhan mentions in his book, *Paradise lost-The Seven Exoduses of Kashmiri Pandits*, an instance when Sheikh Abdullah himself selected teachers for the post of headmasters for various schools by simply pointing a finger at a particular individual; in the process overlooking some well-deserving Kashmiri Pandit teachers. Sometimes, the degree of discrimination reached absurd levels when Kashmiri Pandit teachers became subordinates of their own Muslim students, in the same institution where the former were teaching. This injustice continued from August 15, 1947 to 1971, when the teachers took the matter to the court, finally resulting in the undoing of this unjust provision after 24 years (T.N. versus State of Jammu and Kashmir). During Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad's rule, his education minister, Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, issued an order that classified all Kashmiri Pandits, irrespective of their economic status, as 'forward category', and all Muslims as 'backward category.' The backward category got preference in admission into various

colleges. This ensured that son of a well-placed Muslim got admission into a college, whereas a Hindu peon's son had no such hope. Mir Qasim, on assuming power after Sadiq's death in 1971, passed an order that a *Mufti* or a *Pir* would have the first right of appointment to a government post, irrespective of his merit or qualifications. It was openly propagated that Pandits would get two per cent of the government job — proportionate to their population. With their rate of literacy as high as 90 per cent at that time, denial of jobs to Kashmiri Pandit youth led to their seeking jobs outside the state. "In 1989, the State Government employed over 200,000 people. Out of these, Kashmiri Pandits numbered barely 11,342. Besides these, 1,059 worked in Central Government offices; 620 in Central Government and 204 in State-owned Public Sector Undertakings respectively."[2]

In 1967, a minor Kashmiri Pandit girl, Parmeshwari Handoo, working in a government-run 'Super Bazar' failed to return home in the evening. The parents of the girl tried to lodge a missing person's report at the police station, which the police refused to do. Some good Samaritans from among the community visited the police station in a group to try to convince the Station House Officer of the local police station to lodge the report, but he was unyielding. In the meantime, other relatives and community members joined to lodge a protest. This had no effect on either the employer, who refused to carry out an investigation, or the government which used strong arm methods to suppress the protest. Finally, it was revealed that Parmeshwari Handoo had been abducted, converted to Islam, given a new name, Parveen Akhtar, and married off to a Muslim. Kashmiri Pandits got incensed and launched an agitation that lasted nearly a fortnight and cost the community five lives. But nothing came of it. Though not much was expected of the State Government, the Central Government too refused to intervene, choosing to succumb to Kashmiri Muslim blackmail, which became a norm, henceforth.

After the agitation hundreds of Kashmiri Pandit officials were posted to places outside the valley.

Pandits' Attempt to Join Kashmir's Mainstream

In a sense, 'the Parmeshwari Handoo' incident confirmed Nehru's warning to the Pandits about the consequences that awaited them if they did not join the Kashmiri mainstream. Speaking at the annual session of the NC at Sopore in August, 1945, he said, "If non-Muslims want to live in Kashmir, they should join the National Conference, or bid good bye to the Country... If Pandits could not join it, no safeguards will protect them." It is quite astounding that Nehru, the torch-bearer of democracy, should have advised Kashmiri Pandits to join NC or leave the valley. It showed Nehru's utter disregard for the basic principles of democracy when it came to dealing with Kashmir. Besides exposing the strength of his own conviction and faith in a pluralistic society, it also established Nehru's willingness to compromise to any extent in soliciting Sheikh Abdullah's support. It was evidence enough that in order to appease Sheikh Abdullah, Nehru would go to any extent. In due course of time, this appeasement was turned into blackmail by Sheikh Abdullah, which Nehru and others who followed him, succumbed to repeatedly.

Nevertheless, following Nehru's advice, Pandits, including many of their leading lights, joined the NC in large numbers. They had hoped that the party would become a symbol of secularism and nationalism in newly independent India. But that was not to be. Many decisions taken by the state's interim government were patently directed at marginalising the Pandits economically and politically. Later, Sheikh Abdullah's talk of independence for the State set-in even greater disillusionment among the Pandits. "No wonder that during the four decades between 1948 and 1988 about 200,000 Kashmiri Hindus migrated to other parts of the country."[3]

The Reality Check which Pandits Ignored

(see Appendix 'H', p. 659)

An indication of the coming events was available from what happened in 1986, when the state chief minister, Ghulam Mohammad Shah, aka, Gul Shah, decided to construct a mosque named Shah Masjid, inside the new civil secretariat, within premises of an ancient temple in Jammu. People of Jammu resented this communally driven move and came out on the streets in protest. Gul Shah retaliated; but only after reaching the Valley. In February 1986, he instigated the Muslims by raising the slogan of *Islam Khatre Mein Hey* (Islam is in danger). This provocative slogan, coming from the chief minister himself, was enough to instigate the Muslims, who turned their anger against the hapless Kashmiri Pandits. This resulted in the killing of many Kashmiri Pandits and destruction of their property and desecration of their temples. The worst hit areas were mainly in South Kashmir and also Sopore, where Kashmiri Pandits suffered extensive damage. In Vanpoh, Lukbhavan, Anantnag, Salar and Fatehpur, the rampaging Muslim mobs plundered and destroyed the Pandit houses and shops, burnt down temples and set their business establishments on fire. The Muslim fundamentalists, joined by NC and Congress workers, targeted the Kashmiri Pandit families in a spree of loot and arson, in the process terrorising the hapless minority. Hardly anyone from among the majority community had the courage to come to their rescue. The government proposed stern action against the rioters, but the Muslim fundamentalists opposed it. The situation seemed to be getting out of control, when Congress withdrew support from the GM Shah Government and the centre imposed Governor's rule.

Describing his firsthand account of the events, Jagmohan, who took over as the Governor of the State, wrote in a letter addressed to the country's Home Minister, SB Chavan:

"I toured almost all the affected areas of all the four districts

— Anantnag, Srinagar, Baramulla and Doda. I have visited practically every damaged building, religious or private in villages/towns of Wanpoh, Lukbhavan, Fatehpur, Gautamnag, Salair, Akoora, Sopore and Doda. The damage done to the individual property — houses and shops — and temples of Kashmiri Pandits — is substantial. But much greater damage has been done to the psyche of the Kashmiri Pandits. They are now living like frightened pigeons. In some villages like Wanpoh or Bonigund, Akoora and Slair, their terror stricken faces reminded me of the picture of the war time German Jews slated for the gas chambers. On seeing me they started weeping and bewailing loudly, and demanded immediate evacuation from the Kashmir valley. They did not want monetary or any other kind of relief. They argued that since their property, honor and lives were not safe, relief was meaningless to them. To the best of my ability I assuaged their injured feelings. But it would take a long time for their wounds to heal, if they heal at all."

"It is unfortunate that inaccurate reports were sent by the State Government and District and Divisional administration to me and Central Government. What I saw at the site was vastly different from what was reported to me. For instance, the damage done in village Bonigund, which suffered the most grievous attack on February 20, 1986, has not been indicated in the report of the State Government sent to Central Government as late as March 4, 1986. Here, seven houses were totally burnt, eight partially damaged and looted, three temples and one shop demolished and burnt. This village is not even ¾ kilometre away from the district headquarters. This fact alone demonstrates the many-sided infirmities of the present set-up in regard to which in-depth analysis has been done in my monthly reports from time to time. The State Government had managed that the news were blocked and not allowed to be made known outside."[4]

Kedarnath Sahni, a senior leader of the Bhartiya Janta Party, who visited the valley alongwith two other leaders of the party, soon after

these riots, describes his experience, thus, "We visited every affected village of Anantnag district and found to our surprise and horror that the people at all the places were so terrified that they wanted to leave their places immediately. They had packed their baggage and pleaded with us to take them away from the Valley alongwith us. The situation was horribly shocking. The villages of Wanpoh, Lukbhavan and Bijbehara were badly affected. All temples in the villages had either been razed to the ground or idols placed there were desecrated. The houses of the minority community were heavily damaged. Fear for life and loss of property loomed large on their faces. Next day, we went to Baramulla and Sopore. Here too temples had been stoned and desecrated."[5]

Here is an eye-witness account of Pandit Shadi Lal Tikoo of Anantnag, "I had an opportunity to accompany the then Governor Shri Jagmohan, the then Director General of Police, MM Khajooria, Dr Karan Singh and many other personalities who visited the traumatised Kashmiri Pandits during the communal disturbances. At a meeting at the Government Guest House, Srinagar, I vividly remember when Shri HL Jad, a prominent Kashmiri Pandit, touched the shoe laces of the then Home Minister of India, Shri SB Chavan and with our moist eyes we prayed to him to save Kashmiri Pandits' life, honour, person and property and take steps to checkmate the evil designs of the anti-national elements. The Home Minister directed the Director General Police to camp at Anantnag to supervise the Security arrangements." Hinting at the complicity of the present day political heavyweight of South Kashmir and former state Congress president, chief minister of the state and home minister of India, Mufti Mohammad Syed, in these riots, he writes, 'I am reminded of an incident. After having met the Union Home Minister as described above, we met the then Congress Chief, Shri Mufti Mohammad Syed, at the guest house, the same day... Having left the place after narrating our experiences during the communal disturbances, we

met Shri Jia Lal Chaudhary, a leading lawyer of Srinagar, just outside the gate. After exchanging pleasantries, he inquired of us the purpose of our visit to the Congress chief. Having heard Prem Nath Bhatt and Harji Lal Jad (both his lawyer friends), Chaudhary Sahib said, "Whom did you approach to narrate your plight? To whom did you narrate the sequence of events that led to the devastation and destruction of our temples and the trouble and turbulence caused to our community? You had gone to the wrong person, friends!' ...Before anyone could stop him, the man roared, 'You had gone to him with a complaint to seek justice? An accused cannot sit in judgment on his own abetment to the crime'…"[6]

Mufti Syed's politics was not so well-known at that time. With the passage of time, he came to be closely associated with actions that can simply be termed as anti-national, though he did succeed, to some extent, in camouflaging these in the garb of protecting Kashmiri identity, whatever that meant. People's Democratic Party (PDP) that Mufti Syed formed subsequently, has established a firm foot-hold in the Valley and is posing a serious challenge to the hegemony enjoyed by the NC there. This has been made possible by the issues that his PDP has espoused to endear itself to the separatists and radical elements in Kashmir. Some of these are; insistence on opening the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad road; suggesting Kashmir have its own currency; keeping the State under dual control of India and Pakistan; allotting land to Amarnath Shrine Board and then making it an issue to rouse anti-Indian sentiment to garner separatist vote for his party in the 2008 state assembly elections; his formula of self rule as a solution for Kashmir dispute; declaring his intention to introduce a bill in the state assembly to rename Ananantnag as Islamabad; introducing a separate currency for the state, etc. His daughter, Mehbooba Mufti, has taken on from where her father left. During a seminar in Kashmir recently, she displayed a map of the state which depicted parts of state's territory under Pakistan and China. As if

all this was not proof enough of Mufti's separatist-centric political outlook, one of his MLAs "Nizam-ud-din-Bhat moved a private member's bill in the Jammu and Kashmir State Assembly seeking deletion of sub-clause (b) of Section 147 of the State Constitution which bars legislation challenging Jammu and Kashmir's status as an integral part of India."[7] No wonder, almost the entire Kashmiri Pandit community considers Mufti to be behind the 1986 violence against them, particularly in his stronghold of South Kashmir.

The former Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police, MM Khajooria said, "The 1986 communal riots were intended to be focused on the city of Jammu and the entire Kashmir valley. However, because of the anticipation and the stern measures taken by the administration, the mischief could not succeed in Jammu city, Srinagar and Baramulla districts. In Anantnag, the mischief mongers specially targeted the minority dwellings and places of worship. They let loose an unprecedented wave of terror. The administration failed to rise to the occasion despite unambiguous directions to deal with the situation with firmness. The victims' allegations of connivance on the part of administration, were not without substance… The Deputy Commissioner and the Senior Superintendent of Police were suspended and replaced… However, Governor Jagmohan reinstated them, dispensing with the departmental enquiries... Anantnag violence bore unmistakable signs of fundamentalist creed and practices. Brand new television sets were broken to pieces in full public view, with zealots shouting, 'Allah-o-Akbar'. The desecration of symbols of worship before razing the temples to ground, spoke of the same tale. The involvement of Jammat-e-Islami in these riots was understandable. The surprise, however, lay in good number of activists of mainstream political parties, including the parties in power, taking active part in these shameful acts."[8]

The Indian media either made no effort to report the story, or if it did, it just buried the truth for reasons best known to it. The

security forces stationed in the valley did no better; they looked the other way.

Imposition of Governor's rule in 1986, helped to heal the bruised wounds of Kashmiri Pandits. Besides, they had not, till then, lost complete faith in the Indian state to provide them with the necessary protection. With the improvement in the overall situation, Kashmiri Pandits began to forget the traumatising events of 1986, gradually and regained some confidence.

Alas! This was not to last long. The Islamists had tasted blood; more importantly, they had tested the supine reaction of the Indian State. Actually, the incidents of February, 1986, led to further appeasement of the forces which were involved in letting loose this reign of terror on Pandits. Daily incidents, which carried unmistakable signs of increasing intolerance of the Islamists towards the Kashmiri Pandits, continued to grow. By the end of 1989, the Islamists had become so bold that Kashmiri Pandits would be stopped in the middle of the road and instructed to adjust the timing of their wrist watches to bring it in conformity with the Pakistan Standard Time. Similarly, their women would be stopped and instructed to put on the tilak on their forehead, so as to make them stand out in a crowd. Though Kashmiri Pandits had been facing harassment and discrimination for years, it became brazenly open now.

On many occasions this author's house was stoned at night, because during the day my family members had lustily cheered Kapil Dev's fireworks with the bat, in an ongoing test match. I recall an instance when one of my relatives was beaten black and blue on the suspicion that he was carrying some fireworks home to celebrate victory of Indian cricket team over Pakistan. Needless to say, those celebratory occasions were quite rare, as Indian cricket team mostly lost to Pakistan during that period. In fact, such repeated losses to Pakistan created their own problems, as Kashmiri Pandits would be

harassed with all kinds of barbs and filthy jokes on the incompetence of Indian cricketers. 'Kashmir Cause' certainly provided a motivation to Pakistani cricketers to give out their best, while playing against India. This has been accepted by no less than the legendary Pakistani captain, Imran Khan, himself. Writing about the 1982 tour of Pakistan by Indian cricket team, during which Imran Khan tore into the Indian batting, G Parthasarthy writes, "I asked a Pakistani commentator what he thought of Imran's bowling. The commentator replied that Imran had told him that when he played against India, he thought of Kashmir and treated the encounter not as a cricket match, but as Jehad." In the same write-up the author quotes the first editor of the Jung Group of Newspapers, Mr Khalilur Rahman, as having told him, "Our problem is that we treat the cricket field as battlefield and think that a battlefield is a cricket field."[9]

Pakistan's consistent victories against Indian cricket team, which coincided with the seizing of power by Zia-ul-Haque in Pakistan in the seventies, contributed in some measure to the moulding of Kashmiri Muslim psyche. They started believing that Pakistan could now take on India, even in the battlefield. Such mindset resulted in the increased harassment of Kashmiri Pandits. Shadi Lal Tikoo writes "...The complexion and content of secularism, brotherhood, peaceful co-existence and pluralism started to change. This gave rise to the polarisation of communal and anti-national forces in Kashmir in general and Anantnag in particular. Qazi Nissar Ahmed masterminded this polarisation by spreading venom against India and created a wedge between Hindus and Muslims. Trifling issues that hurt the sentiments of Kashmiri Pandits, were overplayed, resulting in their frustration and helplessness. I remember three incidents that took place in Anantnag town. One day, during 'civil curfew', a young Kashmiri Pandit woman was hurled with the choicest abuses in front of her husband, who had come to district hospital for a checkup (the lady was in the family way). She was

kicked, pinched and subjected to gross indignities. The incident took place at Mehandikadal in Anantnag town." He then narrates the second incident, "A close relative of mine was mercilessly thrashed by Muslim youths in the presence of hundreds of elders at Nai Basti, Anantnag. The aged Pandit kept weeping for hours, unable to get any help and sympathy from on-lookers." Describing the third incident, Shadi Lal writes, "A huge procession, in hundreds of trucks, buses, cars and other modes of transport, was returning from Srinagar at about 9 P.M. The defiant crowd was raising slogans against India and showering unprintable abuses on Kashmiri Pandits. I ran out of my house and joined my brother's family next door. We switched off all lights, bolted all doors and windows. All the inmates, including young children, our daughters and womenfolk huddled in a corner, terrified to death. Alas! This was being done by those who claimed to be devout Muslims and the champions of Islam."[10]

Civil curfew, the calls for which were issued by the Jehadis or their over-ground political outfit, the Hurriyat Conference, disrupted education, hit hard at daily-wagers, prevented treatment of sick and the wounded, particularly those who needed emergency treatment, and generally made life difficult for the people at large. According to official figures, "In 1990, 198 *hartals* were organised. This figure went up to 207 in 1991. Between January 1990 and October 2009, a total of 1,536 'shut-downs' were organised by these organisations."[11]

In September 1988, some armed people opened fire on a temple in Srinagar. This was followed by an assassination attempt on the deputy inspector general of police. Use of lethal firearms openly, for the first time in the valley, added a new and frightening dimension to the ever-increasing militarisation of the radical Kashmiri youth, sending a chill down the Kashmiri Pandit spine. A sudden *hartal* declared in February, 1889, to protest again Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*, turned violent. Kashmiri Pandits and the Indian State were subjected to a venomous tirade. For the first time, the

independence day of Pakistan on August 14, 1989, was celebrated in a big way. The celebrations included conducting of a parade by gun-wielding militants in many parts of Srinagar. In the evening, the valley reverberated with the sounds of fire crackers and *Pakistan Zindabad* (Long Live Pakistan) slogans. The next day, August 15, 1989, the Indian Independence Day, presented a total contrast; sullen and morose faces, black flags, anti-Indian slogans and burning of the national flag marked the protests. On September 8, 1989, the death anniversary of Sheikh Abdullah, special arrangements had to be made to protect his grave, lest it be dug up by the radical youth, who had announced prior plans to do so. This was ironical, as millions of his followers had named him 'bab' (father) at the fag end of his eventful life, less than a decade ago. Frenzied talk of secession and independence of Kashmir marked every social and political discourse.

With the continued deterioration of conditions in the valley, the Pandits increasingly became objects of ridicule and hatred. With the situation turning ominous for them, the Pandits felt that neither the Indian democratic system nor the Janus-faced secularism of Kashmir had any use for them. From then onwards, the terrorist started targeting the innocent Pandits. The brutal tactics employed was the classical modus operandi of the terrorist — 'Kill one and scare one thousand' to instill fear in them. Initially, the aim, perhaps, was to test the reaction of the administration. If this reaction turned out to be ineffective, then the militants would enlarge the scope of the violence, forcing the Pandits to flee the valley. Accordingly, the physical liquidation of Kashmiri Pandits, on selective basis, began. JKLF, being the preferred terrorist outfit of the ISI at that point in time, led this assault on the community. The killing in most cases was not sharp and immediate, but was preceded by inhuman cruelty, torture and rape. For instance, stitching the lips of the victim before killing him and nailing the chest and feet of the victim till he bled to death, were just two of the methods adopted to instill immense fear

in the Pandits. Muslim intelligentsia, political and social activists, professors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, poets, writers, officers in the State and Central government services, etc., became their preferred targets. The victims' only fault being that they were Pandits. The militants, though, would assign a reason for eliminating their victims by labeling them as the opponents of the *Azadi*, being employees of Intelligence Bureau, being a *Mukhbir* (informant), etc.

The terrorists had their own interrogation centres and in most cases, the victims were killed even before the interrogation was over. No Kashmiri Pandit was given any opportunity to explain his position or to prove his innocence. JeI diktat — *Bahas mubahasa se perhez karen* (shun argumentation), was strictly followed. So the carefully selected victims were killed summarily, mostly at point-blank range, in narrow lanes and by lanes, in big streets and thoroughfares, in offices, and at their homes; anywhere and everywhere; the choice was entirely left to the killer. The latter would make a show of his 'bravery' by gunning down an unarmed, defenseless Kashmiri Pandit, caught unawares, in full public view, so as to earn the applause of the public for being a true Mujahid! Basharat Peer, the celebrated author of *Curfewed Night*, describes the open show of force by one of his friends, who had turned a militant, "Surrounded by brown barren mountains, his village had become a militant stronghold. Militants would parade in the open, slinging assault rifles from their shoulders, hanging hand grenades from their belts. Indian troops stayed away most of the time."[12]

Pandits Face the Moment of Truth

(see Appendix 'C' and 'D', p. 637/639)

It was an open secret that arms and ammunition were being stocked in the valley well before the insurgency actually broke out. The sterile reaction of the Government of India to the communal events of 1986, had further emboldened the radical anti-Indian forces. These forces now redoubled their efforts at recruiting, training

and stockpiling arms and ammunition. They began carrying out low-level sabotage activities and made successful attempts at subverting the state from within. Even when the common man in the valley was aware of the storm brewing up in Kashmir, the State and the Central Government agencies turned a blind eye. The deteriorating law and order situation in the valley was dealt with in a ham-handed manner by the State Government.

All this while, people in both rural and urban areas were increasingly coming under the influence of conservative Islamists, whose world view was totally alien to most Kashmiris. The latter revered the numerous *Dargahs* and *Ziarats* that dot the valley and attract lakhs of people all through the year. People talked openly that 'the time for open Jehad against India had finally arrived'. Numerous Islamic Study Centres were opened by JeI. What was intriguing and inexplicable was the fact that these centres were headed by non-Kashmiri Muslims, mainly from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. These study centres carried out sustained and virulent campaign against Hindus, their customs, religion, traditions and rituals, undermining whatever secular beliefs the Kashmiris still possessed. This radicalisation of Kashmiri society manifested itself in the encroachment of temple lands and ancient shrines of Kashmiri Pandits, sudden spurt in cow slaughter and open sale of beef from large number of newly opened shops. More importantly, the separation of Kashmir from India, became the heart and soul of this radicalization.

JeI, which had become an object of hate after Zia-ul-Haque had hanged Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, after a rigged trial, staged a remarkable comeback. Its cadres had been decimated by the common people of Kashmir, only a decade back. Bhutto was quite popular in Kashmir and his hanging by Zia, who was considered to be a 'Jammat' man, resulted in enormous hostility towards JeI cadres, whom they held indirectly responsible for Bhutto's hanging. Such was the outpouring of grief and resultant rage among the people of Kashmir that JeI

supporters were ruthlessly attacked and their orchards destroyed with vengeance. Even the copies of the holy Q'uran used by them were not spared. Basharat Peer observes in *Curfewed Night*, "Grandfather saw angry villagers throwing copies of the Q'uran into a bonfire in the road near our house. I tried to stop them, but they would'nt listen and said that it was a JeI Q'uran."[13]

Now, in the changed context, the party was in the forefront of an armed uprising, infused with and infusing others with the spirit of Jehad. Its fortunes in the valley had taken an about-turn in the past decade. Every political party, irrespective of its ideology, had used the appeal of Islam to garner support. But JeI placed Islam at the centre of Kashmir's political discourse. Therefore, it was JeI which called the shots now. Basharat Peer writes about the campaign launched by JeI, "In early nineties, they had regular meetings called *Ijtemas*, where their workers would try to convince the young men to join their armed wing, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen."[14] Many poems, glorifying the militants, were composed and sung during marriages and festive occasions, to raise their morale and project the whole Kashmiri society as one with them. Some of the songs/ verses composed were:

"Yim hei aeysee pandah wuhree, yim kati aayi
Yiman laji pofi panani, gofov manza haei aye"

(The Mujahideen were only fifteen years old, where did they come from? They came from the difficult routes through caves; may their aunts sacrifice themselves for them)

Yim hei aeysee truwah wuhree, yim kati aayi
Yiman laji maasae panani, gassae manza haei aye"

(The Mujahideen were only thirteen years old, where did they come from? They came hiding themselves in the thick grass; may their aunts sacrifice themselves for them)

"Mujahideen bayo lag hav paeri; Asya chhiv tohi saetyi saeriyey"

(O! Mujahideen brothers, we will sacrifice ourselves for you. We are all with you)

Kashmiri Pandits saw all these happenings with great trepidation, though their faith in the Indian State to protect them and their interests remained unshaken. The rising fundamentalism, open talk of impending Jehad and the increasing sway that radical Islamic philosophy exercised on the Kashmiri psyche, created distress among the Pandits. But they could do nothing, placed as they were, at the mercy of the majority community.

An Ingenious Cover-up

It did not take much effort on the part of the cunning Kashmiri to hide the increasingly communal and rabid face of its society from the ill-informed public opinion in India. The rising Muslim communalism of Kashmiris was termed as the expression of their sub-national aspirations and their desire to protect their regional identity. As far as the gullible Indian politician was concerned, the Kashmiris had to merely label Kashmiri Pandits as Rashtriya Swyam Sevak Sangh (RSS) members or its sympathisers to deflect attention from the real issue. Through subterfuge, these Kashmiri vested interests projected the radicalisation of Kashmiri society as a perceptional aberration, which did not call for any undue concern. Their hold on the Indian public opinion makers and the political class that mattered, was complete. In early nineties, when Kashmir was in flames and the newly appointed Governor, Jagmohan, was fighting the armed militants with his back to the wall, these forces continued to work on the Indian establishment. Rather than giving Jagmohan all the support he required in this grim battle, these forces succeeded with little effort to throw him out of the state. The Congress party joined the chorus to get Jagmohan replaced, as his effective handling

of the situation was giving the separatist militants sleepless nights, posing a direct threat to the vested interests in the state.

Most of the Indian political class preferred not to hear the shrill cries of Jehad against India in general and Kashmiri Pandits in particular. The disinformation campaign launched by Pakistan and its proxies in the valley, actually succeeded in projecting the Muslims of Kashmir as the victims of violence perpetrated by Indian security forces. These Pakistani proxies propagated that Kashmiri Muslims were governed by a corrupt political establishment that was thrust upon them by India! This, according to them, was the root cause of the Kashmiri youth getting totally disillusioned and alienated from the mainstream and picking up guns. These vested interests succeeded to a large extent, in obscuring the rising secessionist movement and its utterly communal character.

The persistent whining of the separatists and the anti-Indian forces about the victimisation of Kashmiris and their assertion that Kashmiris were denied any stake in the state power, had many takers in India. All Kashmir-centric political parties blamed everyone for this state of affairs, except those who were responsible for creating this mess. They blamed India, the Hindus, Nehru, Sheikh Abdullah and the imperialist forces, but not Pakistan, or the fundamentalist, or the secessionists or the armed militants. Astonishingly, those who joined such chorus had themselves held the levers of political power in the state at some stage during the last few decades. Many left leaders in India, while trying to justify the separatist violence, used their typical Marxist jargon to project the Pakistan-inspired, Pakistan-perpetrated insurgency in Kashmir as a 'class war of the down-trodden and the exploited masses.' The MUF, a conglomeration of many parties, ideologically committed to the Islamisation of the state, and JeI, blamed the Indian Government and Hindus of having rigged the 1987 elections, and thus depriving them of political power. The

NC, which benefited from this alleged rigging, too blamed the Government of India for interfering with their government in the state.

Notes

1. English translation of German poem by above author; reproduced by Jagmohan in *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir.*
2. Prof Hari Om, *Kashmir Sentinel,* December 2006.
3. *White Paper on Kashmir,* Dr MK Teng and CL Guddu for Joint Human Rights Committee, (Gupta Print Services, Delhi).
4. The letter is reproduced in Jagmohan's Book, *My Frozen Turbulence.*
5. Contained in a pamphlet published by Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch titled, *Holocaust.*
6. *EXODUS*, A report prepared by Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch, p. E2.
7. Sandhya Jain, *Pioneer,* September 27, 2011.
8. *Sakhshatkar,* Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch, p. 21.
9. *Pioneer,* September 30, 2010.
10. *Sakshatkar,* Op.cit., n. 8.
11. *Pioneer,* December 7, 2009.
12. Basharat Peer, *Curfewed Night,* (Random House Publications Pvt Ltd, 2008).
13. Ibid., p. 184.
14. Ibid.

14

MILITANTS SHED KASHMIRI PANDIT BLOOD

"They who spill the most blood get the highest Headlines"
— Gresham's Law

(See Appendix 'E' and 'F'; p. 641 and 654)

Taking inspiration from the writings of Abd Al Salam Faraj, the author of *Al Farida Al Ghaiba* (the neglected duty), the radicalised Muslim youth of Kashmir embarked on the path of Jehad against



Abandoned Kashmiri Pandit locality as seen in April 1990

non-Muslims by the end of 1989. Faraj in his writings was particularly harsh on the concept of secularism. For him, co-existence in Islam is ruled out, except if the non-Muslim pays *jaziya* (protection money in the form of tax). The terrorists and their mentors within and outside the state knew very well that politically, the Kashmiri Pandits reposed complete faith in secularism and never supported any movement that aimed at snapping the historical, cultural and political ties of the state with India. Whenever occasion arose, the Kashmiri Pandits had vigorously fought the secessionist forces, whose sole objective has always been consistent; push the State of Jammu and Kashmir outside the political and constitutional organisation of India. According to the radicalised Muslims, Kashmiri Pandit community was clearly inimical to their goals and hence needed to be liquidated. Therefore, the Islamists launched a vicious campaign to spread visceral hatred against Kashmiri Pandits. They used terror and violence as the main tools to suppress dissent and to obliterate the opposition to the Islamist's world-view. They hoped to achieve the objective of dismemberment of Kashmir from India; India that stood for liberal, secular and democratic values. In due course, the Islamists planned to replace the existing order in Kashmir by a new political dispensation, based on religious theocracy. Having succeeded in creating a conducive environment for giving shape to their nefarious designs, they felt that the time was now ripe to implement these plans.

In complete violation of Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international covenants, the terrorists debased, dehumanised and brutalised the peaceful community of Kashmiri Pandits, by all foul means in their armoury. The Muslim terrorists groups adopting different evocative names to motivate their cadres, launched a brutal campaign of rape and murder against the Pandits. In order to induce enormous fear in the entire community, the Pandits were subjected to gruesome torture before being killed. Once

the desired degree of fear in the whole community was induced, the Islamists felt that the Pandits would choose to flee in panic from Kashmir. The indoctrinated breed of terrorists churned out by the Muslim seminaries of hate, fanaticism and religious bigotry, launched an all-out religious crusade against the non-Muslim ethnic groups. They hoped to cleanse the valley of *Kafirs* and clear the path for establishing an Islamic state, governed by *Shariat* (Islamic Law). In such a state, the non-Muslims, who preferred to stay back in Kashmir, would be automatically reduced to nothing more than *Zimmies* and the land would become *Dar-ul-Islam.*

With the State Government completely subverted, the Muslim terrorists now targeted a weak, unarmed and panic-stricken community with impunity. JKLF drew first blood with the pre-planned murder of Shri Tika Lal Taploo, an advocate and prominent and vocal member of the provincial wing of BJP. He was a political activist and had always selflessly served everyone, including the Muslims of his *Mohalla,* which made him equally popular among them. He fell to terrorists' bullets very close to his house on September, 14, 1989, in broad day light, while he was on his way to the court. The Muslims of his locality mourned his death and joined a mammoth funeral procession. This cold blooded assassination, in front of numerous eye-witnesses, sent a shiver down the spine of the Kashmiri Pandit community. From then onwards, fear gripped them as never before. Despite the murder having been committed in front of many eye-witnesses in broad day light, the killers were never caught. Such failure on the part of the administration emboldened the terrorists to further increase their murderous activity. Not a day passed without Kashmiri Pandits being killed in the valley. As describing each and every killing would be beyond the scope of this book, only representative cases have been included here.

The next prominent victim of the terrorist violence was Pandit Nila Kant Ganjoo, a retired sessions judge, who had sentenced



Tika Lal Taploo



Nila Kant Ganjoo

Two prominent Kashmiri Pandits killed in the initial phase of Militancy

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Maqbool Bhatt; a founder member of JKLF, to death. Bhatt had been convicted of murder and finally executed. The former judge was gunned down on October 4, 1989, on Hari Singh High Street, a busy thoroughfare of Srinagar. The dead body lay in a pool of blood where it fell, for quite some time, with no police anywhere in sight and no Hindu daring to even cover it with a piece of cloth. The Muslim passersby and shopkeepers watched the scene with jubilation writ large on their faces. It was only much later that policemen removed the dead body, dragging it like the carcass of a stray dog. The scene was captured on video and telecast a number of times. Fear psychosis began to grip the Kashmiri Pandits, which only intensified with more killings.

Forty-seven years old Sheela Koul (Tikoo), wife of Pran Nath Tikoo, belonging to Dalhasanyar, Srinagar, had gone to see her brother at Shivapora, a few kilometers away, on October 31, 1989. While returning home in the evening, as she reached Habbakadal, close to her residence, she was shot in the chest and head by JKLF

terrorists. She was brought home on a handcart as three-wheeler auto-rickshaws had suddenly and inexplicably stopped plying on the route. The taxi operators refused to carry her to the hospital. Despite repeated phone calls to the SMHS Hospital, Srinagar, the ambulance failed to arrive. She was somehow carried to the hospital on a folding bed, where she was left unattended and eventually died.

Fifty years old Ajay Kapoor, son of Shiva Nath Kapoor, was a resident of Maharaj Gunj, Srinagar, where generations of his family had lived before him. A genial and a God-fearing businessman, Ajay Kapoor was sprayed with bullets by militants, who now openly flaunted their Pakistan-supplied Kalashnikov rifles. Though his assassination took place in full public view on December 1, 1989, no one dared to touch his body for hours together. That was the kind of fear, indifference and apathy induced by the gun-wielding militants.

On December 27, 1989, 57 years old Prem Nath Bhatt, a leading advocate of Anantnag, whose popularity among Muslims was well-known, was killed with a volley of bullets aimed at his head. Though the killing took place in the main market, no Muslim uttered a word of sympathy for him. A young boy, Sanjay, who dared to clean the blood at the site of the murder, was threatened so brazenly that he had to flee from the valley during the night. Poignantly describing this event, Shadi Lal Tikoo writes, "...On Khichri Amavasya, called *Khetchimavas* in Kashmiri, an important religious festival of Kashmiri Pandits, an esteemed social worker and an undisputed leader of Kashmiri Pandits of Anantnag, Shri Prem Nath Bhatt, was brutally killed. On December 28, 1989, the mortal remains of Shri Bhatt were cremated at Nagbal Shrine, in front of Durga Mandir. Thousands of Kashmiri Pandits bid a tearful farewell to this great soul of Anantnag. During the cremation ceremony, I was told that since I was the next prospective victim, I must leave the Valley at the earliest. During the next two days, I could not escape

as restrictions imposed under Section 144, were rather strict. On January 1, 1990, accompanied by my brother's son and my brother-in-law, I left my motherland, changing three modes of transport to camouflage my identity, and reached Jammu the same day. Here I joined a close friend at Talab Tillo. Thus began my Vanvas (exile)…"

On January 4, 1990, a local Urdu newspaper, *Aftab*, published a press release issued by HM, asking all Pandits to leave the Valley immediately. *Al Safa,* another local daily repeated the warning. These warnings were followed by Kalashnikov-wielding masked Jehadis carrying out military-type marches openly. Reports of killing of Kashmiri Pandits continued to pour in. Bomb explosions and sporadic firing by militants became a daily occurrence. Explosive and inflammatory speeches being broadcast from the public address systems of the mosques became frequent. Thousands of audio cassettes, carrying similar propaganda, were played at numerous places in the Valley, in order to instill fear into the already terrified Kashmiri Pandit community. Recalling these events, the former Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police, Shri MM Khajooria says, "The mischief of the summer of 1989 started with serving notice to the prominent members of the minority community to quit Kashmir. The letter said, 'We order you to leave Kashmir immediately, otherwise your children will be harmed — we are not scaring you but this land is only for Muslims, and is the land of Allah. Sikhs and Hindus cannot stay here.' The threatening note ended with a warning, 'If you do not obey, we will start with your children. Kashmir Liberation, Zindabad.'"[1]

They signaled the implementation of their intentions quite blatantly. ML Bhan of Khonmoh, Srinagar, a government employee, was killed on January 15, 1990. Baldev Raj Dutta, an operator in Lal Chowk, Srinagar, was kidnapped on the same day. His dead body was found four days later, on January 19, 1990, at Nai Sarak, Srinagar. The body bore tell-tale marks of brutal torture.

Night of January 19, 1990

The night witnessed macabre happenings, the like of which had not been witnessed by Kashmiri Pandits after the Afghan rule. Those that experienced the fear of that night are unlikely to forget it in their life time. For future generations, it will be a constant reminder of the brutality of Islamic radicals, who had chosen the timing very carefully. "Farooq Abdullah, whose government had all but ceased to exist, resigned. Jagmohan arrived during the day to take charge as the Governor of the State."[2] He took over the charge of the Governor just the previous night at Jammu. He had made efforts to reach Srinagar during the previous day, but the plane had to return to Jammu from Pir Panjal Pass, due to extremely bad weather. Though curfew was imposed to restore some semblance of order, it had little effect. The mosque pulpits continued to be used to exhort people to defy curfew and join Jehad against the Pandits, while armed cadres of JKLF marched through the streets of the valley, terrorising them no end.

As the night fell, the microscopic community became panic-stricken when the Valley began reverberating with the war-cries of Islamists, who had stage-managed the whole event with great care; choosing its timing and the slogans to be used. A host of highly provocative, communal and threatening slogans, interspersed with martial songs, incited the Muslims to come out on the streets and break the chains of 'slavery'. These exhortations urged the faithful to give a final push to the *Kafir* in order to ring in the true Islamic order. These slogans were mixed with precise and unambiguous threats to Pandits. They were presented with three choices — *Ralive, Tsaliv ya Galive* (convert to Islam, leave the place or perish). Tens of thousands of Kashmiri Muslims poured into the streets of the valley, shouting 'death to India' and death to *Kafirs*. These slogans, broadcast from the loudspeakers of every mosque, numbering roughly 1,100, exhorted the hysterical mobs to embark on Jehad. All male Muslims, including their children and the aged, wanted to be seen to be participating in

this Jehad. Those who had organised such a show of force in the middle of a cold winter night, had only one objective; to put the fear of death into the hearts of the already frightened Pandits. In this moment of collective hysteria, gone was the facade of secular, tolerant, cultured, peaceful and educated outlook of Kashmiri Muslims, which the Indian intelligentsia and the liberal media had made them to wear for their own reasons. Most of the Kashmiri Muslims behaved as if they did not know who the Pandits were. This frenzied mass hysteria went on till Kashmiri Pandits' despondency turned into desperation, as the night wore itself out.

For the first time after independence of India from the British rule, Kashmiri Pandits found themselves abandoned to their fate, stranded in their own homes, encircled by rampaging mobs. Through the frenzied shouts and blood-curdling sloganeering of the assembled mobs, Pandits saw the true face of intolerant and radical Islam. It represented the complete antithesis of the over-rated ethos of *Kashmiriyat* that was supposed to define Kashmiri ethos.

The pusillanimous Central Government was caught napping and its agencies in the state, particularly the army and other para-military forces, did not consider it necessary to intervene, in the absence of any orders. The State Government had been so extensively subverted that the skeleton staff of the administration at Srinagar (the winter capital of the state had shifted to Jammu in November 1989) decided not to confront the huge mobs. Delhi was too far away, anyway. Hundreds of Kashmiri Pandits phoned everyone in authority at Jammu, Srinagar and Delhi, to save them from the sure catastrophe that awaited them. The pleadings for help were incessant. But not a soldier came to their rescue. Therefore, Kashmiri Pandits found best protection in huddling together indoors, frozen with fear, praying for the night to pass. The foreboding of the impending doom was too over-powering to let them have even a wink of sleep.

The Pandits could see the writing on the wall. If they were lucky enough to see the night through, they would have to vacate the place before they met the same fate as Tikka Lal Taploo and many others. The Seventh Exodus was surely staring them in the face. By morning, it became apparent to Pandits that Kashmiri Muslims had decided to throw them out from the Valley. Broadcasting vicious Jehadi sermons and revolutionary songs, interspersed with blood curdling shouts and shrieks, threatening Kashmiri Pandits with dire consequences, became a routine 'Mantra' of the Muslims of the valley, to force them to flee from Kashmir. Some of the slogans used were:

"Zalimo, O Kafiro, Kashmir harmara chod do".
(O! Merciless, O! Kafirs leave our Kashmir)

"*Kashmir mein agar rehna hai, Allah-ho-Akbar kahna hoga*"
(Anyone wanting to live in Kashmir will have to convert to Islam)

La Sharqia la gharbia, Islamia! Islamia!
From East to West, there will be only Islam

"Musalmano jago, Kafiro bhago",
(O! Muslims, Arise, O! Kafirs, scoot)

"Islam hamara maqsad hai, Quran hamara dastur hai,
Jehad hamara Rasta hai"
(Islam is our objective, Q'uran is our constitution,
Jehad is our way of our life)

"Kashmir banega Pakistan"
(Kashmir will become Pakistan)

"Kashir banawon Pakistan, Bataw varaie, Batneiw saan"
(We will turn Kashmir into Pakistan alongwith Kashmiri Pandit
women, but without their menfolk)

"Pakistan se kya Rishta? La Ilah-e- Illalah"
(Islam defines our relationship with Pakistan)

Dil mein rakho Allah ka khauf; Hath mein rakho Kalashnikov.
(With fear of Allah ruling your hearts, wield a Kalashnikov)

"Yahan kya chalega, Nizam-e- Mustafa"
(We want to be ruled under Shari'ah)

"People's League ka kya paigam, Fateh, Azadi aur Islam"
("What is the message of People's League? Victory, Freedom and Islam.")

Wall posters in fairly large letters, proclaiming Kashmir as 'Islamic Republic of Kashmir', became a common sight in the entire Valley. So were the big and prominent advertisements in local dailies, proclaiming their intent:

'Aim of the present struggle is the supremacy of Islam in Kashmir, in all walks of life and nothing else. Anyone who puts a hurdle in our way will be annihilated'.

Press release of HM published in the morning edition of Urdu Daily '*Aftab*' of April 1, 1990.

'*Kashmiri Pandits* responsible *for duress against Muslims should leave the Valley within two days.*'

Headlines of Urdu Daily, *Al Safa,* of April 14, 1990.

'With Kalashnikov in one hand and Q'uran in the other the Mujahids would openly roam the streets singing the *Tarana-e-Kashmir.*'

Here is an eyewitness account of that night by Capt SK Tikoo (Retd), who alongwith his family experienced the orchestrated happenings, first hand.[3]

The Longest Night

"January 19, 1990. Twenty-one years have already passed since that dreadful day which turned into a never-ending night, when dawn that ends the darkness of the previous night so very naturally, seemed to be a distant dream. When you think of those agonising and tormenting hours of that night even today, your heart misses a beat and if you do not come out of that nightmarish experience immediately, there is every possibility of going into convulsions that could lead to a catastrophe. Such is the impact and the imprint of that day on our lives that you have to carry those scary and torturous memories with you till you are alive. *Chilai-Kalan* (the most severe period of winter) was at its worst. It had not snowed for quite sometime and the sub-zero temperature was sending a chill down our spine. On top of it, there was mounting tension in the air. Selective killings of Kashmiri Pandits had already started and we were still awaiting some miracle to take place that could restore some semblance of normalcy. I, unlike other days, came home early at around 6 P.M. As usual, I parked my car on the main road near the then Kani Kadal Fire Station, just across the shop of the milkmaid, famous for her *paneer* (cheese) and then walked through the nine serpentine *kochas* (narrow lanes) leading to my home, situated on the eastern bank of *Kuta Kohl*, once a roaring tributary of Vitasta. All the houses on our side belonged to Pandits with the sole exception of the house belonging to Munnawar Sheikh, a well-respected trader of Kashmir Arts. The same was true on the western bank of *Kuta Kohl*, though in reverse; everyone on this bank was a Muslim with the sole exception of a house belonging to Moti Lal Bhan, who as a teacher had achieved a celebrity status in his profession.

It will be interesting to recall my personal experiences of the horrible day preceding the deadly night of the January 19, 1990. Mohan Chiragi, against heavy odds, had taken it on himself to bring out the Srinagar edition of the leading Urdu national newspaper

Quami Awaz, which was already being published from New Delhi, Lucknow and Patna. The paper was an instant success, and its office in the Khidmat House on the bund at Abi Guzar, Srinagar, was a meeting point for all those who still had the courage to talk differently; against the militancy. The security of the staff of nearly 30 persons, all Kashmiri Muslims, consisting of reporters, correspondents, copyists, *katibs*, photographers and those on administrative duties, had to be taken care of. Working till late at night, these employees were keen to have me with them, and it suited both Chiragi and me. Though they were all carrying out their duties as dedicated newsmen, yet you could not rule out the possibility of someone leading them astray, if left alone. And why were the staffers keen that I stay with them till they closed down for the day; usually 10.30 or 11 P.M. — a deathly time those days? I was, in fact, their insurance. Tahir Mohi-ud-Din (now editor of very popular Urdu weekly *Chataan* published from Srinagar) was the news editor and he had to be left at his residence in Natipora. He was scared of crossing the Ram Bagh Bridge, where the security forces would subject anyone at that late hour, to a thorough search, which meant that the person had to stay out in the cold for quite sometime, no matter what profession one belonged to. Morfat Qadiri, son of that legendry journalist, Qadiri Saheb, had to be dropped at Narsingh Garh. There were others who had to be dropped en-route at Tanki Pora, Dalhasanyar and Bana Mohalla.

The real 'fun' would begin at Tankipora-Zaindar Mohalla, I thought. Incidentally, I discovered that the jeep we were travelling in was displaying *Haz min fazal-i-rabi*[4] in bold letters on its front bonnet. This legend was not there a few days back. Besides, *Quami Awaz* written on its windscreen had been very discreetly obliterated. Coming back to Zaindar Mohalla. It was pitch-dark by the time we reached there; no street lights, no lights even in the residential houses on either side of the road. Atmosphere was very eerie; as if

the entire city had been taken over by ghosts. As we moved on, the headlights suddenly lighted-up some creepy movement far ahead of us. The passengers in the jeep said in one voice, *Bisam-i-Allah* and *Allah-o-Akbar*. The driver immediately use the dipper thrice to signal to the now visible crowd, maybe 50 yards ahead of us, that we were a friendly lot. We slowed down as the hostile crowd of some 20 to 30 young boys surrounded us immediately. Two or three of them were displaying AK-47 rifles and a few were having pistols in their hands. *Soura-i-Yaseen* was continuously recited by the staffers. Strangely, none seemed to be worried about me, despite the fact that they wanted me to take care of them, even when confronted by armed militants. We identified ourselves as journalists representing *Kashmir Times* (considered their own newspaper by the militants). However, they singled me out and wanted me to step out of the jeep. I was absolutely unperturbed, though the rest of my fellow passengers almost collapsed expecting to see the last of me. There was further shock in store for my fellow passengers when they saw and heard me shouting at the leader of this blood-thirsty crowd, "*Haya Ashqa* (O! Ashiq)..." Before I could complete the sentence, he came running towards me trying to hide his AK-47 rifle, and responded, "*Papa, Tse kya chhukh yeti karan* (Papa, how come you are here)? I knew Ashq; a young, twenty-year-old six-footer, with an athletic build, since 1984, when he was a member of the youth wing of the Awami National Conference led by GM Shah. He immediately ordered his crowd to get lost and allowed us to go. However, he soon changed his mind. Within a fraction of a second, the crowd re-assembled and we were told that we could restart our journey only when we could not hear them anymore. With the engine of the jeep resting, the silence of the graveyard was broken all of a sudden by the bone-chilling chorus-singing by the militants, led by Ashiq himself, moving in four abreast column towards *Haba Kadal* (for obvious reasons, being a Kashmiri Pandit locality). They were singing:

Jago! Jago! Subah huyee;
Roos ne baazi hari hai, Hind pe larza taari hai,
Ab Kashmir ki baari hai,
Jago jago subah huyee.

(Wake up! It is already dawn:
Russia has already been defeated. Now India is under attack
And it is the turn of Kashmir.
Wake up! Wake up!)

Those who were unlettered and illiterate in the crowd, (they formed the majority) would repiy:

Jago jago subahan vouthi houye
(Wake up! wake up! it will be utter chaos in the morning).

Imagine the plight of those of us (Kashmiri Pandits) going through this torture night after night. Nowhere did we ever see a policeman or any other security personnel en-route.

On January 19, 1990, Bahadur, our helper, was home too and so was my brother, Ashok. Bahadur lighted the coal *Bukhari* (stove) and we settled down to a hot cup of tea, exchanging blank glances. My mother, who had lost her vision almost completely in both eyes, was the only one asking questions on current situation. Clock on the wall showed it was already 7 P.M., and it was time to switch on the television for news. My sister from Narsing Garh, not far away from our house, was on the phone, "Papa, can you hear something...?" She sounded nervous and scared. I could hear some sloganeering in the distance, through my receiver, but could not make out what it was all about. It was scary though. I tried to reassure my sister and wanted her to give more details. All that she could say was that huge crowds seem to be coming from Chhatabal area towards Karan Nagar and they were raising anti-India, pro-Pakistan slogans. The cause of

concern was that they were raising anti-Kashmiri Pandit slogans too. She wanted to confirm if such slogans were being raised elsewhere too. She was sure that her time was up and she bid me a tearful good-bye. I was at my wits end; not knowing what to do. I again rang her up and she let me hear the loud and clear slogans raised apparently by huge crowds which were coming closer. I asked her to keep calm and not to lose hope. I once again assured her that all would be well within a few hours. But who could guarantee a few hours' of safety? Our area was still without commotion; but then a call came from Bana Mohalla. They too repeated the same but added that they had seen people coming out on roads, huddled up in groups and sort of conspiring in hushed tones.

Gradually, it was the same situation all over the city. It seemed that the city had been taken over by JKLF, the only terrorist outfit operating then. It was 9 P.M. and we saw hordes of Muslims coming out on Guru Bazar bund, right opposite us, on the other side of *Kutta Kohl*. They were not raising any slogans, but their loud whispers were reaching us loud and clear. There was complete blackout on our side as all Kashmiri Pandit households had put off their lights and all the family members were virtually huddled up in complete darkness in a single room. On the other side of *Kutta Kohl*, which was now reduced to a drain, and which could be crossed on foot in less than five minutes, we saw some people pointing towards our house. We could distinctly hear them say, "Look, they are enjoying the warmth of the *Bukhari* (stove)... but for how long?" I, my brother and Bahadur too, failed to make out who they were. At this stage, we appeared to be out of the harm's way. But suddenly the situation took a turn for the worse. One of my two telephones (3223) got disconnected. The other one (5273), whose cable came from the Muslim side was, thankfully, in working order.

Now hundreds of Muslims came out of their homes, braving the freezing cold. They started raising threatening slogans at a hand

shaking distance. Time now was 11P.M. Now onwards the time literally froze. I started receiving desperate calls; first from Bansi Parimoo; a little later from Rageshwari, both from Sanat Nagar; later from Wanabal and then Rawalpora. End seemed a few minutes away as help was not coming from anywhere. I called up 'who's who' of Jammu and Kashmir Police. Some did not pick up the phone and others sheepishly expressed their inability and helplessness to provide any assistance. I called Mohan Chiragi in Delhi and got all the phone numbers of those who mattered. One of them was the then Home Secretary, one Shiromani Sharma. He was sort of disturbed by my call and was shockingly surprised to hear that the situation in Kashmir was so bad. He confessed that nobody had informed him about this looming tragedy. He promised help.

I did not stop there. I traced Mufti Mohammad Syed in Mumbai, where he was addressing a public meeting, and got in touch with him. It took me a lifetime to reach him. It was just past midnight when he came on the phone. He advised me not to panic as help was on the way. I repeatedly called some of my Muslim friends and soon discovered that it was a futile exercise. There was one Muslim lady of Rawalpora, who sounded as worried and tense as we were; that was a big consolation. In the meantime, our immediate neighbours with whom we shared a common wall stealthily walked into our ground floor room to feel little more secure in a larger group. My calls to army did not mature and the blood thirsty, hostile crowd seemed to be knocking at our doors. Death was imminent. Something had to be done and done very quickly. My brother and I chalked out a plan; plan to die heroically. There was one satisfaction: My brother's children, Anu and Chandan, were safe in Delhi. We had seen them off alongwith photo-journalist Mushtaq at Srinagar airport only a few days earlier.

Surprisingly, everybody in our neighbourhood was convinced that we had lots of weapons in our home, though the fact was that

my brother Ashok had just one double-barrel licensed gun at home. We had a box-full of cartridges too. We appreciated that the frontal attack would come from across the *Kutta Kohl*. If that happened; we decided to fire as many rounds as possible, killing or injuring anyone coming in our line of fire. In the meantime, we prepared the women folk to lay down their lives by self-immolation. A can full of kerosene oil was kept handy. It goes to the credit of my mother and her age old friend Rupavati, to volunteer for this kind of death. Even Bahadur's wife and her two young kids prepared themselves for the ultimate sacrifice. As a last attempt; I called an army phone number in Udhampur. I was assured by an officer of the rank of a major that a column of soldiers was ready and it would move out from Badami Bagh Cantonment soon. We waited, but no help came.

The night seemed never-ending. It was at 3 A.M. that I called the Muslim lady in Rawalpora once again. She sounded a little relaxed. I connected the movement of the army column that I was just assured of, with her near positive response. I calculated that the army would have reached Rawalpora first through the by-pass and hence the lady appeared less panicky. But my calculations proved ill-founded when she clarified that her neighbour, a senior politician and a former minister had joined the militant processionists, and on his advice her husband too had joined the anti-Indian processionists, some of whom were armed to the teeth. She further said that they were convinced that *Azadi* was only a few days away and they could ill-afford not to be seen as part of this victorious procession. Incidentally, both these gentlemen are living today; while one of them retired as Chief Justice of a State High Court, the other rose to be a cabinet minister once again.

The last to call me around this time was Inder Krishen Raina from Ishbar. He informed me that the hostile crowds had come out on the roads even at that late hour, to ensure that they were not denied their share of *Azadi*, now at hand. By now one thing was

quite certain; Kashmiri Pandits, all across the city of Srinagar were waiting with bated breath for the certain eventuality — death at the hands of their one time neighborus, who were prowling the streets, raising venomous anti-Pandit slogans. There was no news from rest of the Valley. The time shown by the grandfather clock on the wall was just past 4 A.M. But that hardly made any difference, as the menacing crowd just a few metres away from our doors, was more restive than an hour earlier, even when the temperature outdoors had dipped to around seven degrees Celsius below zero. The battle cry of *Ya Ali! Ya Ali!* grew louder and closer.

As the womenfolk, huddled together, started chanting *Shiv Shiv Shambu,* we loaded the gun. End seemed seconds away. But nothing happened. Ashok looked at me and we concluded that the marauding crowds were probably waiting for a signal to attack the Pandits simultaneously, all over the city. Why else should they have not attacked us after raising that battle cry. After all, it would not take more than a million strong agitating blood thirsty mobs parading the city streets for almost nine hours, to decimate the already almost-frozen-to-death Pandits in a jiffy. I made another call to that major in Udhampur. This time he gave me a telephone number of some other officer in Badami Bagh cantonment in Srinagar. I called him and to my surprise, he responded immediately, assuring me that the column was ready and they were awaiting the orders from the civil authority. "Where is the civil authority?" I retorted. But alas! He had disconnected the line. Waiting for the inevitable, the deathly silence was broken by the howling of stray dogs.

My mother was the first to hear the *Azan* from a distant mosque. She said excitedly, "*tala, gash ha aao*" (look, it is dawn!). We removed a part of the curtain hesitatingly and could see the silhouette of huge crowds, now unbelievably silent, disappearing into narrow lanes. Within a few minutes, with better visibility, we could hardly see anybody on the bund across the *Kutta Kohl.* Was it a jumbo repreive?

We learnt later that our house was the target. It was not attacked for the fear of heavy reprisals. After all, the Islamists were convinced that our house was actually an arms and ammunition dump. They apprehended that we had the capacity to take on the ill-armed hordes, even if they came in large numbers. But why did they not annihilate the rest of us? Who and what saved us that night? The answers are still not clear. And look at our naivete; most of us continued to live there after surviving this nightmare."

The fear generated by the happenings of the night was so potent that some sick and old people could not withstand the horror and died of shock. One of the unfortunate victims was the wife of Triloki Nath Raina who worked as a driver in All India Radio, Srinagar. Writing about his experience of this night and the events preceding it, Bushan Lal Bhatt, a resident of Nandimarg in South Kashmir, writes in *Vichar* (page H 40):

"During the month of January 1990, fear and threats to Pandits gained momentum, with Muslims joining the rallies and protests in thousands. On January 19, 1990, during the whole night, loudspeakers from mosques raised Jehadi 'war cries'. Thousands of people participated in these Jehadi gatherings. About 20 government offices were set on fire at tehsil headquarter, Kulgam, by thousands of protestors on January 22, 1990. Administration was paralysed; police did not fire even a single shot. It remained a mute spectator as directed by the Mujahideen. With these developments, mass exodus started from these areas. Eighty per cent of the people left from our village leaving behind their houses and properties. About 10 families were left in Nandimarg after April 1990. In 1992, many of the houses left behind by Pandits were looted and burnt down. An ancient Shivalingam located in the main Shiva temple was stolen, but the police did not even lodge an FIR (First Information Report- a formal complaint first recorded by the police when a citizen brings an

untoward happening to its notice), despite the idol being registered with the Archeological Survey of India and with the Police."

Kashmiri Pandits, pro-India Muslims and other minorities, that represented the opposition to the crusade launched by the rabid Islamists in Kashmir, on behalf of Pakistan, continued to live in the valley after January 19, 1990, despite facing grave threat to their lives. But this could not last for too long. With physical elimination and threat to their honour and dignity staring them in the face, tens of thousands of them across the valley took a painful decision to flee their homeland. Thus began the Kashmiri Pandits' long journey into the unknown.

Pandits fleeing from the cities were lucky as they managed to get hold of some transport till they reached across the Jawahar Tunnel, beyond the reach of the marauding Mujahids. But those in the rural



A partially destroyed abandoned Kashmiri Pandit's house at Magam.



Ransacked house of the author in Srinagar, as seen after exodus in April, 1990

areas suffered enormous privations; some of them, particularly in South Kashmir, had to trudge the whole distance from their villages to the Jawahar Tunnel covering a distance of 50 to 60 kilometres, on foot in the bitter cold of winter. The route was mostly snow-bound and passed through difficult mountainous terrain. Men, women, children, sick and the infirm; all walked the distance to avoid meeting the same fate as some of their relatives and neighbours had. Some women had to sell off the very symbol of their married status, the *Dejihor*, to pay for a lift in fruit-laden vehicles or some other load carriers. Interview of a scholar of sociology and history, a resident of Srinagar city is reproduced below. The interview was taken a couple of months after the event.

"I was informed that a *Naka* (a loose cordon around a place to prevent ingress and egress into and out of the area) had been thrown around the locality where I lived, with the intention to kill me, as and when I stepped out of the house. As the day passed, fear gripped me as I considered the possibility of the militants forcing their entry

into my house after dark. When the night set in; I quietly sneaked out of the house, wrapped in a blanket. I was able to give a slip to the killers because it had started drizzling and the bitter cold, made worse by the winter rains, had perhaps, dampened their spirits and they seemed to have abandoned their guard. The information that I would be waylaid was secretly given to me by a young boy of my own community. After leaving my house; I took refuge at a fairly distant place, in the house of a relative. The next day, the militants sent a delegation of the local mosque committee to my house. Most of the members of the delegation were known to my people. The delegation told my family members that the reports of my anti-struggle activity had reached the Mujahids and it would be prudent for me to appear before their tribunal, where my explanation would be considered sympathetically. The delegation assured my family that they would themselves ensure that no harm would come to me. My family members assured them that I would appear before the tribunal as advised by them. During the night, my people quietly left the house, carrying bare minimum essentials in a small vehicle, hired at an exorbitant fare. In the early hours of the morning, the vehicle reached the outskirts of Srinagar. At a pre-designated place, where I had been instructed to wait, I boarded the vehicle. No one spoke a word. We continued with our journey into the unknown. By the afternoon, we were slowly moving up the slopes of Banihal."

The former Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police, MM Khajooria says, "The trauma of tiny minority forced to encounter unprecedented brutality, exposure to terror, torture, gruesome murders and extreme hatred that too in the name of religion, is common knowledge. Lakhs of terrorised men, women and children were forced to flee for life and honour... The narration enables a peep into the enormity of the trauma and the intensity of pain that a miniscule minority was subjected to in its own country, with the State and Central governments literally watching as mute

spectators. Kashmiri Pandits, who took pride in being a part of the great Indian Nation, were horrified and bewildered when the succor and support from Delhi, that they expected as a matter of right, failed to materialise. The rulers in Delhi and their agent, the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, who straddled the state apparatus like a potentate with unlimited powers, disgraced themselves and the nation by miserably failing to discharge their constitutional duty and moral obligation to protect and reassure the miniscule minority during the worst crises in their history. Generations of Indians will bear the stigma of this National let-down."[5]

No one in the administration made any attempt to prevent exodus of Pandits or help build confidence among the scared community, by providing them with adequate security, after the events of January 19, 1990. On the one hand, the members of this scared and shell-shocked community had to fend off the murderous attacks of the militants armed to the teeth, and on the other, they had to arrange whatever transport they could organise, to ensure their safe escape from the valley. While doing all this, they had to pray and hope that militants did not target them as they were highly vulnerable in such a disorganised state at this point in time.

The uprising may have appeared to be sudden as Kashmiri Pandits were literally caught off guard. But those in the know have a different opinion. GM Sofi, a leading and highly respected journalist from the valley, known for his courage and objectivity, said during an interview, "It was a volcano smoldering since the formation of Bangladesh in December, 1971. The rulers of Pakistan held India responsible for its dismemberment and nursed a sense of vengeance. Having failed in their efforts to annex Kashmir in two wars with India, they conceived the idea of arming and brainwashing young Kashmiris, in which they met a grand success. Thousands of Kashmiri youth crossed the LoC and returned with heavy arms, equipment and ammunition." On being asked as to how so many young men could

return with heavy arms and ammunition, Sofi said, "I believe that either Indian security forces on the LoC were complacent or they turned a Nelson's eye to the goings on. The weapons were hidden in mosques, abandoned temples, river banks, basements and even deserted houses. 40,000 pieces of weapons and a large quantity of ammunition has been recovered. An estimated three times (of) this quantity, still remains hidden in Valley."[6]

In the meanwhile, there was no let up in the killing of Pandits after this horrible night, as the subverted police and conniving local administration turned a blind eye to the depredations indulged in by the armed militants. With the local media completely functioning under the diktat of militants, the national media hiding these killings and central government adopting an ostrich-like attitude, the militants had a field day. In fact, with no one holding the armed gangs accountable, targeted killings of Pandits only increased in their frequency, barbarity and scope. Many young men, women and prominent Kashmiri Pandits fell victims to the armed gangs of Kashmiri Muslim terrorists, for no reason other than they were Hindus. Here are some victims, randomly selected.

Krishen Gopal Berwa, a central government employee of Budgam and Romesh Kumar Thussu, a state government employee of Trehgam, Kupwara, were gunned down on February 1, 1990. Satish Kumar Tikoo, son of a famous shopkeeper of Habba Kadal, Shri Prithvi Nath Tikoo, well-known by his popular name Pratha *Galdar* (one who runs a grocery store) was shot dead on February 2, 1990, near his residence at Karfali Mohalla. Rattan Lal of Rawalpora, working in military engineering service (MES), a purely civilian organisation, was killed on February 13, 1990.

The next victim of this ruthless and pre-planned murder was a young prominent Kashmiri Pandit, Shri Lassa Koul, Director, Doordarshan Kendra at Srinagar. He was gunned down outside his

house at Bemina on February 13, 1990, when he had just returned home from his office.

The poignant death of another young man, Anil Bhan, who belonged to the same *Mohalla* as the author, left deep scar on the whole community. He was killed by Farook Ahmed Dar, aka Bitta Karate, nemesis of Kashmiri Pandits in the first flush of Militancy in 1989–90. This exponent of Karate is believed to have killed 35 persons in all, before he was arrested. Thirty-four of these were Kashmiri Pandits. In a television interview given later, he himself acknowledged to have killed 29 Kashmiri Pandits. Incidentally, his only non-Pandit victim was a teenage Muslim girl, named Dolly Mohi-ud-din, who is believed to have spurned his advances.

In their well-planned conspiracy of killing Pandits, the rabid militants had drawn up lists of prominent people of the community, whose killing would send the right message that they wanted to deliver to the whole community. But the actual killers at ground level did not always recognise their victims correctly, leading to some Kashmiri Pandits getting killed unintentionally, due to mistaken identity. Anil Bhan was one such unfortunate being. He was a probationary officer working in the UCO Bank at Srinagar. My brother, Ashok Tikoo, who lived a few yards away from Anil Bhan, too worked in the bank, though a different one, State Bank of India. Both used to leave their homes at roughly the same time. On the fateful day of February 16, 1990, Ashok Tikoo, dressed in a leather jacket, left home for the bank at the usual hour of around 9.30 A.M. A message was immediately conveyed to Bitta Karate, who lived close by in Chhota Bazar. After traversing the long narrow lanes from his house to the main road, Ashok remembered that it happened to be the birthday (as per Hindu calendar) of his elder brother, Captain SK Tikoo. He decided to return home to take part in the traditional *Pooja*. On the way back home, he met Anil Bhan, almost similarly dressed in leather jacket, heading towards his office. By the time

Bitta Karate reached the bifurcation leading to Haba Kadal, Anil too had reached that very spot. Anil's spotter, having seen Ashok Tikoo earlier heading toward the same direction, but failing to see him return, told Bitta Karate that the man working in the bank was dressed in leather jacket and was headed towards Habba Kadal. Bitta Karate just followed the lead. He approached Anil from behind and fired at him at point blank range, only a few meters from his house. Anil, who was barely 26 and betrothed to be married shortly, died on the spot, a victim of mistaken identity. This was acknowledged by Bitta Karate himself to his friends who also happened to be known to both Ashok as well as Anil Bhan. The murdered boy's mother literally went delirious on seeing his young son lying in a pool of blood. Incidentally, all three lived in the vicinity of each other. Another young life lost to wanton mindset.

Continued spate of killings took a heavy toll in the coming few days and months. Ashok Qazi of Tanki Pora, Srinagar, met his brutal end on February 25, 1990; Naveen Sapru, working in the telecommunication department was assassinated on February 27, 1990; PN Handoo of information department met his gruesome end on March 1, 1990, and so did Tej Kishen of Badgam, who was hanged to death on the same day.

RN Handoo, Personal Assistant to Governor, was killed outside the gate of his house at Narsinghgarh, Srinagar, on March 18,1990, just as he was about to board the official vehicle to take him to his office. The very next day in the early hours of March 19, 1990, Shri BK Ganjoo, an extraordinarily efficient and conscientious telecommunication engineer, was brutally killed in his home at Chotta Bazar, Srinagar. The manner of his killing finally sealed the fate of Kashmiri Pandits, as his close Muslim neighbours of many decades, played an ignominiously crucial role in getting him killed. On seeing the killers coming, Ganjoo hid himself in a charcoal drum. Unfortunately for him, his neighbours saw him hiding there. The

killers failed to find him in the house and were about to leave, when his neighbours, whom he had trusted all along, redirected them to the charcoal drum. A dozen bullets were pumped into the confined space of the drum, killing the trapped engineer within those dark confines. His young widow pleaded with the jubliant killers to shoot her and her two baby daughters too. However, they marched out chuckling "who would then mourn over his dead body?" From then onwards, the only remaining safety valve of Kashmiri Pandits, the trust in their Muslim neighbours to protect them, too was gone.

The following day, March 20, 1990, saw the murder of Shri AK Raina, Deputy Director, Food and Supplies, in his office at Srinagar. While he died in harness, his subordinates stood silently watching the macabre proceedings.

Forty-five-year old Bansi Lal Sapru, son of Keshav Nath Sapru, a resident of Gulab Bagh, Srinagar was assassinated on April 24, 1990. His neighbours accosted him at the gate of his house and he was asked to accompany them into his own orchard for a chat, where three bullets were pumped into him at close range. One bullet struck him on his head and he instantly fell to the ground, dead. His family members screamed and cried in anguish, but nobody came even to console them.

Prof. Kundan Lal Ganjoo, an agriculture scientist at Sher-i-Kashmir University of Agriculture Science and Technology (SKUAST) at Wodhura, Sopore, his home town, was kidnapped along with his wife and his cousin, Pista, at 9 P.M. on May 2, 1990, by his own Muslim students and their friends belonging to the terrorist group, 'Lashkr-e-Ayub'. He was then taken to a mosque located on River Jhelum. Here, six bullets were pumped into him. When the first bullet was fired, he involuntarily moved his hand, diverting the aim of the shooter. The bullet hit Pista on the heel; injuring him slightly. He jumped into Jhelum and swam across to the other bank.

After playing hide and seek with the militants, he reached Jammu after two days. Ganjoo's body was kept in the mosque for the night and then thrown into Jhelum the next morning. His wife, Prana Ganjoo, was gang-raped and then dismembered. A stone was tied to her body and thrown into Jhelum, never to be traced.

Ms Sarla Bhat was a nurse in Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Srinagar. This institute, located in downtown Srinagar, the hotbed of militant activity, had turned into a safe haven for terrorists, who included some members of the faculty, as well. Sarla was suspected of being an informer of the police. At the behest of Dr AA Guru, a prominent JKLF ideologue, she was first gang-raped by a number of Muslim bad characters of the area, before she was stripped naked and murdered in a shameless manner on April 19, 1990. Her dead body was thrown on the roadside in full view of the public.

Ravinder Kumar Pandita, son of Nanak Chand Pandita, born on October 4, 1958, resided at Mattan, Anantnag. He was a poor man and worked as a daily-wager in telecommunication department. While returning home from work on April 24, 1990, the Muslim terrorists, lying in wait for him, shot at him from close range. As he fell dead, the killers danced over his dead body in glee. Though the scene was witnessed by many passers-by, they just moved on.

The horrific death of Shri Sarwanand Koul 'Premi' and his son, Virinder Koul, aged 64 and 28 respectively, was unbelievable. The former was a much loved and respected poet and a scholar who had contributed immensely to the enriching of Kashmiri literature. One of his much acclaimed contributions was a translation of Bhagvad Geeta into Kashmiri verse. He was a true secularist, whose poems were a reflection of genuine *Kashmiriyat*. Collection of books in his library too reflected his true beliefs; liberal, non-sectarian outlook on life. Despite rise in the level of violence directed against the Pandits,

he continued to live in his village, hoping that having been a teacher, who had taught nearly all the literate Muslims in the area, he had nothing to fear. But his hopes were belied and trust broken when Muslim terrorists entered his house on April 28, 1990, and ordered all the members of his family to get assembled in one room alongwith all their ornaments, money, shawls and precious clothes. The family, sensing trouble, offered every precious item they had in their home to the killers. The militants first collected everything, including all the ornaments that the women of the house were putting on, by cruelly snatching these from them. The terrorists then destroyed his library; but that did not satisfy their thirst for blood. Stuffing their loot in one suitcase, Premi was ordered to carry it and follow them a small distance away from his house. The members of his family wailed and begged the terrorist to take everything but let go of the family patriarch. The killers assured them that he would return safe and unharmed. When the militants did not let go of Premi, his son, Virinder, insisted upon accompanying his old father. "If you wish you may also accompany him," said the killers. That was the last the family members saw their beloved son and father.

For two days, the father-son duo was put to extreme torture. The spot where Premi would put his *tilak* mark was nailed. He was tortured by burning butts of cigarettes. The limbs of his body were broken. His eyes were gouged out. Finally on April 30, 1990, he was hanged from a tree and bullets were fired on him. His son, Virinder, was butchered in the same manner. Even by their own standards, the treatment meted out to Shri Premi and his son must put even the worst Muslim tyrant to shame.

Surinder Kumar Raina, son of Jia Lal Raina, was only 23 years old when he was murdered. A resident of Tullamulla, Ganderbal, he had become an orphan at a very young age. In order to supplement the family income in the absence of his father, he had taken up a job of a liftman in the SKIMS, Soura. It was from here that he was

kidnapped while he was on duty, on May 2, 1990. While he was being kidnapped, the other spectators burst into cheer and dance. He was taken some distance away on Ali Jan Road where a burst from a Kalashnikov caused his instantaneous death.

Twenty-seven-year old Ashok Kumar, son of Bhasker Nath, lived with his parents and two sisters at Pulwama. He met with a gruesome death at the hands of HM militants on May 13, 1990. After being kidnapped, his hands and feet were broken and he was dragged to the main road crossing of the town. His tormentors first plucked out his eye-balls with iron rods in the presence of hundreds of Muslims who relished every moment of this macabre scene. Finally, after enjoying all the sadistic fun, he was killed by a burst of bullets. Among the spectators there was a bard who sang "Islam is glorious and great."

On the same day, in another part of the valley, Veer Ji Bhat, son of D.N.Bhat, met with a similar fate. He was born on January 31, 1959 at Nagam, Badgam. A young man with bubbling spirits and a promising career, he was employed as a junior engineer in the state irrigation department and was presently posted at Shopian. He was a social activist who went out of his way to help everyone in distress and difficulty. On the fateful day of May 13, 1990, he was out in the local market, close to where he lived. While he was talking to his friends in his usual jovial manner, suddenly a bunch of militants arrived in a car and sprayed him with bullets. Despite bleeding profusely he caught hold of one of the militants. But other militants, armed to the teeth, sprayed more bullets on him, before making good their escape. The incident took place in full public view, but no one intervened. Veer Ji was carried to SMHS Hospital where a doctor operated upon him and declared him out of danger. But after half an hour a man came out from the operation theatre and declared him dead. When his relatives removed the white cloth covering his face, they found him having turned completely white. It reinforced their suspicion that the accomplices of the killers, who

had turned all hospitals in the valley into their hiding places, had drained Veer Ji of his blood.

The incident had the desired effect. While the Pandits were totally scared and hid themselves behind bolted doors, the members of the Muslim majority flaunted V-signs all around.

In the continued saga of killings that took a heavy toll of Kashmiri Pandits, Bushan Lal Koul, son of Shridhar Koul, became its next victim. Born on June 14, 1948, and now a government employee, he resided at Amnoo village, not far from Kulgam, Anantnag. On May 16, 1990, he was kidnapped by HM militants and strangulated to death with a steel wire.

Manmohan Bachloo, aged 27, son of Janki Nath Bachloo, belonged to Qazihama, Baramulla. He was posted at Karnah as an postal assistant in the postal department. On May 18, 1990, he came to his native town, Baramulla, on a holiday. Information about his impending arrival at Baramulla was conveyed to the militants through their accomplices. In fact, one of the killers trailed him right from Karnah itself. When he reached home, he was called out by one of his killers, who asked him to join him for a cup of tea at a tea shop, located in the heart of Baramulla town. Unsuspecting Manmohan accompanied this Muslim killer with whom he had been friends in his younger days. As soon as he entered the tea shop, other killers, already waiting for him there, shot him at point-blank range. He died instantaneously.

Born on July 8, 1962, Dilip Kumar, son of Mohan Lạl belonged to Mujamarag, Shopian. He was unemployed and unmarried too. After his father's death a long time ago, the responsibility of looking after the family rested on his young shoulders. A small plot of ancestral land helped him eke out a living. But being a *Kafir,* he had already become a target of Muslim militants. On May 19, 1990, some armed Muslim militants knocked at his door. Knowing what

that knock meant, his mother, gripped with fear and panic, came out to tell the killers that Dilip was not home. But that did not convince them. They waited outside the house for a while and finally broke open the door. They got hold of Dilip, dragged him out and carried him off as a prize catch. His mother, beating her breast and screaming pleaded with the killers to spare her son's life, followed the killers to some distance. His brother in the meantime, rushed to the nearby police station for help, but no help came. Dilip was now subjected to extreme torture. His teeth were hammered out. When he had nearly become unconscious with pain, twelve bullets were pumped into him. Then his dead body was hung from a tree with a letter pinned on his chest. The letter stated that any person who dared lift the body would be paid rupees one lakh. No one dared. His body was subsequently cremated by police.

Ms Girja Tikoo, a school teacher in Bandipora had gone to school to collect her salary on June 4, 1990. On the way back, she called on a friendly Muslim colleague. The terrorists kidnapped her from there, with the Muslim lady not even making an attempt at restraining them or even interceding on her behalf, leave alone thwarting their evil designs. They gang-raped her, ripped open her abdomen, placed her on saw machine while she was still alive and sawed her into two halves. Sometime later, almost a similar fate befell Kumari Babli and her mother Smt. Roopwati of Pulwama. Shri Balkrishen Tutoo of Habba Kadal, Srinagar, an officer in agriculture department, became a victim of callous and collaborative actions of doctors. He was critically wounded on June 22, 1990, while trying to plead with the merciless terrorists who had barged into his house to abduct and kill his brother. Tutoo resisted their attempt and was fired upon, wounding him critically. He was rushed to the hospital, where the callous doctors on duty allegedly completed the rest of the work!

Fifty-two-year old Makhan Lal Raina, son of Gopi Nath Raina, a resident of Kharyar, Srinagar, was a medical assistant posted

at a dispensary at Khan Sahib in Badgam district. He was quite popular among the people of the area, mostly Muslims, to whom he had rendered a yeoman's service during many medical emergencies. On June 22, 1990, he was picked up from the dispensary in presence of nine other Muslims. However, nobody intervened. He was subsequently tortured in a most brutal manner and finally shot dead. His dead body was said to have been chopped into pieces. The mutilated body was eventually recovered from Dardpora in Badgam.

Fifty-nine-year old Raj Nath Dhar, son of Dina Nath Dhar, belonging to Qutub-ub-din Pora, Alikadal, Srinagar, was assassinated on June 30, 1990. He lived a simple life as a retired person, taking care of his ailing mother. When the assassins arrived to kill him, his old and infirm mother raised a hue and cry seeking assistance from everyone to save his son. But as usual, no one came to their rescue. After being shot, he was carried by some people to SMHS Hospital, Srinagar, where he died for want of medical aid and proper care.

Gopi Nath Raina, son of Govind Ram Raina, born on January 1, 1941, belonged to Manigam, Ganderbal. He ran a medical shop at Kangan. He was labeled as an informer, a very handy alibi to include him in the 'hit list'.He was shot dead in his own shop by HM cadres on July 7,1990. Later, the organisation owned up the murder through the pages of *Kashmir Times* and *Aftab*; the two dailies published from Jammu and Srinagar respectively.

Dina Nath Mujoo, a 70-year old theosophist and an unassuming scholar had recently moved from Fateh Kadal to Rawalpora in Srinagar. Having been a teacher all his life, he had contributed immensely towards educating the Muslim youth of Fateh Kadal, where he had spent bulk of his life. Besides being an educationist, he experimented with J Krishnamurti's thoughts on education. Now at 70, tall and healthy Mujoo passed his time in philosophical contemplation. He had no interest in politics and was a harmless

person by any standards. Yet the terrorists did not spare him. They intruded into his house at the dead of night on July 7, 1990, seized him and stabbed him ruthlessly, before decapitating him. His wife too was assaulted and badly wounded. She survived because the terrorists thought that she was 'dead'.

Born on May13, 1953, Shiban Kishen Koul, son of Radha Krishen Koul of Ashmuji, Kulgam, Anantnag, was a primary school teacher. His students mostly belonged to Muslim community, whom he taught with all dedication. However, that did not prevent the militants from slaughtering him on the uneven and pot-holed track of his native village on July 15, 1990. His father too was slaughtered the next day, i.e.,July 16, 1990, in the same manner. The assassinations were carried out by his close neighbours.

Sixty-one-year old Autar Singh, son of Fateh Singh, a Sikh by faith, belonged to Saimnoo in Kulagam district of Kashmir. An ex-serviceman; he was presently employed by Hindustan Petroleum at their branch office in Pulwama. He was suspected of being *Mukhbir*. After his duty hours on July 26, 1990, when he was returning home, the armed Muslim terrorists shot him dead.

Ms Babli Raina of Sopore, a teacher by profession, was gang-raped in her house in presence of her family members on August 13, 1990.

Chand Ji Kher, son of Dina Nath Kher, and a resident of Vessu, Anantnag was killed on August 17, 1990. A young boy in his teens, he belonged to a very poor family. He was called out by his Muslim friends. The moment he was outside his house, he was shot at and the killers vanished from the scene.

Prof DP Khazanchi, son of Damodar Khazanchi, was born on October 6, 1939, at Srinagar and lived at Kani Kadal, a few yards away from where the author lived. He was a professor of physics, known for

his calm temper and soft spoken demeanour. But as ill-luck would have it, he had lost his sanity in later part of his life. Sometimes he would just loiter around aimlessly, talking to himself. But his condition was no guarantee for his safety against the marauding gangs. On October 6, 1990, his birthday, when he completed 51 years of his age, three bullets were pumped into him, killing him on the spot.

Zinda Lal Pandita, son of Prakash Ram Pandita, born on April 4, 1931, resided at Bagatpora, Handwara. After being kidnapped from his residence on October 6, 1990; he was brutally strangulated with steel wire in an orchard nearby, by JKLF murderers.

Jagan Nath Pandita, son of Ganesh Nath Pandita was born on November 17, 1943. He belonged to Bagatpora, Handwara. A widower, he was kidnapped from his house and taken to his own orchard, where he too was strangulated with steel wire. His killing took place during the intervening night of October 7 and 8, 1990.

Pushker Nath Razdan, aged 47, son of Tika Lal Razdan, a resident of Khonmuha, in Pulwama district, was assassinated on October 12, 1990. Some masked terrorists barged into his house at 9 P.M. when it was pitch dark outside, and without a warning knocked him down on the floor. They picked him up and dragged him outside his house, before shooting him at close range. The bullet hit the left side of his chest. His wife and others in the family cried in panic but not a single neighbour came to their rescue. Finally, he was carried to the Army Hospital at Badami Bagh in Srinagar, where he was operated upon. However, he failed to survive the wounds even after surgery. The policemen from the Pantachauk police-station completed their formalities by arriving at the scene of the incident after he was cremated. It was later revealed that he was allegedly killed by the HM Jehadis.

Maheshwar Nath Bhat, son of Zana Bhat, born on June 20, 1921, resided at Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar. At 8 A.M. on October 15,

1990, three armed Muslim militants barged into his house and started making enquiries about his son-in-law, an officer in the department of forests. They were told that the son-in-law, had migrated to Jammu long back, but had recently returned to join his office in Srinagar on promotion, after he had received many assurances from his Muslim colleagues, with whom he had remained in close touch. While such enquiries were going on, the son-in-law had hid himself in a bathroom, bolted from within. Frustrated at not getting the prize catch, the killers opened indiscriminate fire, killing Maheshwar Nath on the spot and injuring his old and ailing wife. She was taken to the hospital at Badami Bagh in a state of unconsciousness, where after initial treatment, she was shifted to Jammu under security cover. Maheswar Nath's other relation, who too was injured in the firing, was also admitted to the same hospital, but succumbed to his wounds.

Omkar Nath Wali, son of Parmanand Wali, born on May 4, 1935, was a resident of Chak-i-Rajwati, Vessu in Anantnag district. He was an assistant sub inspector of Police, posted at District Police Lines, Anantnag. His family stayed in Jammu. He was kidnapped on January 2, 1991 and shot dead in cold blood. Neither his last rites were performed, nor was an FIR lodged with the police. It was later revealed that his own colleagues in the police department had hatched a conspiracy for his murder in connivance with the terrorists of JKLF.

Ms Asha Koul was abducted from Achabal, Anantnag, and taken to an abandoned house of a Kashmiri Pandit refugee in Srinagar. There, she was gang-raped for many days and then tortured to death. Her body was found later in a decomposed state in that very house on August 8, 1991.

Som Nath Koul's son Surinder Kumar Koul, born on May 4, 1971, at Batagund, Handwara, was killed by sheer treachery. His

whole family had shifted to Jammu in the wake of Muslim terrorism that had engulfed the valley. The young boy at the age of twenty had received a call letter for an interview for the post of a teacher for which he had applied before his family had moved out to Jammu. He had remained in contact with his Muslim friends in the valley, who had encouraged him to return at least for the interview. They had assured him of full safety. His parents, however, were dead set against letting him travel there. Nevertheless, acting against the advice of his parents, he left for Srinagar. When he reached Srinagar, the same treacherous friends who had assured him of safety, kidnapped him. After torturing him no end, he was finally shot to death at Langet on August 26, 1991.

Kanya Lal Peshin, son of Kanth Ram Peshin of Pazalpora, Bandipora, was born on October 4, 1937. A poor farmer who barely managed to survive on his measely income; he was kidnapped from his house at 9 P.M. on October 18, 1991. He was taken three kilometers away from his village and was subjected to brutal torture. Pins were driven into his nails and finally, a metre length piece of cloth was stuffed into his mouth to stifle him to death. His dead body was later found at Ajar, Bandipora. He was said to have been killed by the assassins of HM.

Similarly, Bimla Braroo of Nai Sarak, Srinagar, and her daughter, Archana were raped in the presence of her husband, Sohan Lal, before all three were killed on March 31, 1992.

Here is an eyewitness account of Sudesh Kumar, a law student of Kashmir University carried by *The Illustrated Weekly of India,* last quarter, March, 1990. "TK Razdan and I were travelling in the same matador when some militants stopped the vehicle. They then pulled out their guns and fired at him close range. Then they dragged the body out of the matador and took it to a nearby mosque. There they searched his pockets and took out his identity card and nailed it to

his body and threw the body on the road. It was only later that the police took away his body..."

These brutal killings continued with more members of the Kashmiri Pandit community falling prey to the Jehadi hordes, who used their newly acquired Kalashnikov rifles to deadly effect on these soft targets.

Shambu Nath Garyali's son Ashwani Kumar Garyali, a 25-year-old, bright and promising young man, belonging to Chhatabal, Srinagar, was doing chartered accountancy course. On June 24, 1990, five masked men entered his room where he was studying and accused him of being an informer. They brought him down to the first floor of his own residence and pumped five bullets into his head and abdomen. He was immediately rushed to SMHS, Srinagar for surgery. The doctors refused to admit him. He was then carried to SKIMS, Soura, where doctors did not bother to attend to him and was allowed to die. He was sent to the Jawahar Lal Nehru Memorial Hospital, Rainawari, for post-mortem, where his relatives had to wait for hours, before the formality was completed after paying gratification. His parents strongly believe that had he been operated upon in SMHS Hospital in time, he would have survived.

Similar was the fate of Radha Krishen Kaw, son of Balbhadher Kaw, a resident of Kralkhud, Srinagar. Born on May 18, 1931, He was a veteran teacher and had retired as an education officer. All through his career he had taught thousands of Muslim students. Even after his retirement, he continued to be devoted to his profession. The Muslim assassins entered the school where he was taking a class and forcibly took him out from the back door of the school and sprayed him with bullets. This incident took place on August 24, 1990.

Similar was the manner in which a social activist, Prof Nila Kanth Raina met his end.

Ashok Kumar Koul, son of Bhaskar Nath Koul of village Kharbrari, Tehsil Kulgam, District Anantnag, was kidnapped by four militants from his house on May 13, 1990, at 9.30 A.M. They took him first to Shallipora village, from where he was taken to Boulsoo village, where police found his dead body the next day.

Mushtaq Latram, who was later arrested but subsequently released in exchange for the hostages of highjacked Flight IC-819, in Kabul, was allegedly involved in the gruesome murder of four members of a family at Mallapora, Habbakadal, Srinagar. The infamous terrorist gunned down Jawahar Lal Ganjoo, Mrs Ganjoo, Badri Nath Koul and his wife Lalla, all living under one roof, leaving behind two unmarried daughters, two teenage boys and 85-year old paralytic mother.

Kashmiri Pandits killed between 1989 and October, 1990

Sr. No.	District	Pre 1989	1989		1990		
			July to Sept	Oct to Dec	Jan to April	May to Aug	Sept to Oct
1	Anantnag	-	-	2	8	45	7
2	Bandipora	-	-	-	2	4	-
3	Behama	-	-	-	1	3	-
4	Baramulla	-	-	-	-	15	-
5	Budgam	-	-	-	1	14	-
6	Dambi Dola	-	-	-	-	1	-
7	Dangi Wachi	-	-	-	-	1	-
8	Ganderbal	-	-	-	-	-	2
9	Handwara	-	-	-	-	4	-
10	Jammu	-	-	-	-	5	-
11	Kawoosa	-	-	-	-	1	-
12	Khaller	-	-	-	-	1	-
13	Kishtwar	-	-	-	-	1	-

14	Kupwara	-	-	-	3	9	-
15	Kathua	-	-	-	1	-	-
16	Nawhatta	-	-	-		1	-
17	Pulwama	-	-	-	5	12	2
18	Sopore	-	-	-	2	5	-
19	Srinagar	3	1	2	40	106	9
		3	1	4	63	228	20

Source: Survey carried out by Centre for Minority Studies, Jammu and Kashmir State. Individual killings described in foregoing pages are included in this table.

Raman Bhalla, the Minister of Rehabilitation in the State Government said on March 23, 2010 that, "219 Kashmiri Pandits were killed in 1990." This was a shocking under-statement as the number of Pandits killed was many more than these figures.

Most victims were innocent, ordinary people living in poverty. Those killed included teachers, lawyers, media men, political activists, intellectuals, errand boys, shopkeepers, traders, social activists, writers, poets; anyone, as long as he or she was a Kashmiri Pandit. In most cases, merely killing their victim was not the sole purpose of their brutal action: inflicting intense pain on the victim before killing him or her was equally important. Therefore, death did not come with least pain, say, with a bullet to the head fired suddenly and unexpectedly. Quite often it was preceded by sustained torture, sometimes lasting for many days. The methodology adopted for killings included, strangulation by steel wires, hanging, impaling, branding with hot iron, burning alive, lynching, gouging of eyes while still alive, drowning, slicing, dismemberment of limbs, dragging to death, draining of blood and in many cases, slaughtering the victim. Other methods employed for inflicting pain and torture included; burning cigarette being applied to the naked bodies of the victims; boiling wax poured on highly sensitive parts of their bodies; nails driven into the foreheads; tongues being chopped off; genitals cut

off; private parts and breasts of women hewn open; women ripped into two parts on a wood-slicing machine, etc,.

Given below is a sample of the manner in which some victims were put to death:

- After being kidnapped on April 27, 1990, from his home in Sadhu Ganga, Kupwara, Brij Nath Shah's body was found hanging from a tree two days later, with his lips stitched.
- Shyam Lal of Chiragam, Anantnag, met with an even worse fate. He was kidnapped in May 1990. First his hands and feet were chopped off and then his skull was battered. His remains were stuffed into a sack and deposited on the thresh-hold of his house, where it was recovered by his brother.
- On May 27, 1990, Prem Nath of Uttarsu in Anantag district was kidnapped and subsequently impaled by being nailed on the chest and feet.
- Three officials of Life Insurance Corporation of India were kidnapped from Srinagar. After being tortured, they were confined to an abandoned Kashmiri Pandit house which was then set ablaze. Two of the tortured men were burnt alive, while the third one escaped with 50 per cent burns.
- Brij Nath Kaul of Hermain, Shopian, an employee of agricultural department and his wife were tied to a running vehicle near their home. Their mangled bodies were recovered 10 kilometers away, later.

Scores of Kashmiri Pandit bodies were found floating in River Jhelum daily; all had been drowned. Besides these, many dead bodies were recovered from different places of the valley, with their hands and feet tied. The violence against them attained grotesque proportions when it was found that they had been branded with

hot iron while still alive, while others had their eyes gouged out. However, the most dastardly and inhuman method of killing was adopted by the institutions which are meant to save life, not take it away, i.e., the hospitals. Injured Kashmiri Pandits, when brought to the hospitals for treatment, were either allowed to die without treatment or were deliberately killed by doctors in collusion with the militants. Several cases of injured Kashmiri Pandits bleeding to death unattended were reported throughout the valley. To add insult to injury, the killers prevented the relatives to carry the dead body to Jammu for cremation according to Hindu rites. These dead bodies were disposed off by police, causing great hurt and injury to the sentiments of the unfortunate relatives and their families.

In those cities and towns where Kashmiri Pandit population was relatively thicker, the militants would strike suddenly and unexpectedly. Having identified their victim, they would approach him openly, with the weapon concealed inside the common Kashmiri winter garment, the *Pheran*, and then, without any fear of intervention by the police, suddenly open fire on the unsuspecting Pandit, at close range, giving no chance to the victim to escape. The state government, reeling under the massive onslaught launched by the heavily armed militants, and weakened by the internal subversion, was unable or unwilling to save the Pandits. In remote regions, where Kashmiri Pandits were scattered in penny packets, they were totally left to the mercy of the militants and their neighbours, who worked in cahoots, either because they were too scared to stand up to the militants diktat or had willingly joined them. In these places, the violence against the Pandits was characterised by abductions, kidnappings, assault on womenfolk, torture and other gruesome forms of assassination. The aim was to induce so much fear in the hearts of the miniscule population that they would decide to flee their homes.

It may be mentioned that all these killings were perpetrated by

Kashmiri Muslims and not the militants sent by Pakistan. These killings took place in the first phase of militancy, dominated by JKLF, which was made up entirely of local youth. What was even more distressing was the fact that in most cases those who killed knew their victims well enough and were even friends with them. Some Muslims too fell prey to the brutal assault let loose by the militants on any one who represented nationalistic leanings even remotely. Some of the prominent Muslims who were assassinated in the first phase of militancy included Mohammad Yousuf Halwai, a loyal worker of the NC; Mohammad Shahban, a leading journalist, whose paper *Al Safa* later turned into the militants' mouth-piece, after his assassination.

The burning passion of Islamists to enforce their own version of puritanical form of Islam manifested itself in many ways; eliminating cultural icons, even though from their own community, was one of them. In 1993, Shamima Parveen, the first woman to perform the traditional Kashmiri satirist dance, *Band Pathaer* was brutally killed. Similarly, a very popular and secular minded Member of Legislative Assembly, Mustafa Mir, too was killed after being kidnapped, tortured and finally strangled. In the absence of any authoritative figures published by the state government about the total number of non-Muslims killed in Kashmir during the past two decades, voluntary/non-government organisations and private agencies have put such number at 2,500. Out of this figure, the number of Kashmiri Pandits killed stands at 1,800.

As per the report submitted to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) by Panun Kashmir Movement, the number of Kashmiri Pandits killed till October, 1990, was 319.

Editor of the *Kashyap* Vani, BN Nissar, has compiled a list containing names of 765 Kashmiri Pandits who were massacred.[7]

Kashmiri Pandits could easily have been provided with some semblance of security by the state government in places where their population was larger. But the protection of this miniscule minority appeared to be an alien constitutional obligation of those who manned the government machinery in Kashmir. All its responsible organs watched with complete indifference the mass exodus and the resulting sufferings of the Pandits, who were left to fend for themselves. During all this while, Kashmiri Pandits continued to receive threatening letters, death warrants and highly disturbing and inflammatory telephone calls. They literally became sitting ducks, as the terrorists enjoyed unfettered liberty and power to kill. The new symbol of power, the Kalashnikov, hung loosely from their shoulders, turned the terrorists into a law unto themselves, particularly so, as elements within the government had abdicated their responsibilities or worked in collusion with them.

The nexus between the law-enforcing agencies and the terrorists was apparent to those who were at the receiving end of this violence. In fact, with huge recruitment of known JeI cadres into Kashmir Police during the two decades preceding the onset of militancy in Kashmir, such collaboration with the terrorists, was very much expected. A memorandum, submitted by Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, Jammu, to the Governor of the State, General KV Krishna Rao, clearly brought out the above facts. It stated, "The ineffectiveness of the State Government has not been able to check loot, arson and killing of innocent people. Instead of the Government, it is the militants who are the de-facto rulers of the Valley today. The ruling political forces are solely concerned with their own survival, avoiding the wrath of the secessionists. Happenings in Anantnag, Sopore, Baramulla, Tral, Murran, Pulwama, Ishber, Vicharnag, Shopian and other places in the Valley are indicative of the fundamentalists' designs regarding their planned attacks on the minorities. On December 15, 1989, in Shopian, men, children and old women of the minority community

were mercilessly attacked and womenfolk molested. The murder of Mahant Keshav Nath, Tikka Lal Taploo, NK Ganjoo, Prem Nath Bhat, Ajay Kapoor and others, was to create scare and awe among the minority community to force them to leave the Valley. The pace of exodus has further accelerated now."

After bemoaning the inability of the State Police to either identify or apprehend even a single Muslim assailant, it emphasised, "The Pakistan-trained underground elements, who are armed with modern weapons, openly engage in battles with the security forces, which unmistakably speaks of the inefficiency of the State Government itself."[8]

There appeared no saner elements left among the enlightened and literate segments of Kashmiri Muslim population, who could counsel restraint. Even those who genuinely believed in the teachings of Rishis and Sufis were frightened into silence and inaction by the terrorists and their camp followers, who took on the mantle of true preachers of the purest form of Wahabi Islam. These Islamists were largely seen to be fighting the *Kafirs* and thus were called Mujahids. With the entire Kashmiri Muslim population up in arms, screaming at the top of their voices, 'death to the Kafirs', and backing it up by actually killing them in large numbers, Kashmiri Pandits saw darkness enveloping them on all sides.

Violence directed at Kashmiri Pandits: 1986-April 1997

Particulars	Numbers
Militancy-related killings	765
Killing by militants	430
Killing by bomb blasts	5
Unidentified dead bodies recovered	88
Deaths due to critical injuries	60

Rape victims killed	22
Kidnapped victims killed	124
Brutal killings	10
Deaths due to strangulation	8
Deaths due to hanging	18
Rape victims	18
Critically wounded cases	108
Wounded victims	30
Kidnappings	66
Kidnapped victims escaped	10
Missing persons	56

Source: BN Nisar, *Kashyap Vani*, Jammu. Quoted in the *Report on the Impact of Migration on the Socio-economic Conditions of Kashmiri Displaced people;* Jammu and Kashmir Centre for Minority Studies.

Notes

1. MM Khajooria, former Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police.
2. Kanchan Gupta, *Pioneer*, August 10, 2008.
3. Capt SK Tikoo (Retd), *The Longest Night*, Downloaded from KashmirInterchange@yahoogroups.com January 20, 2011.
4. It means a task 'brought to completion with the grace of God'. In the Islamic tradition, every task is commenced and finished in the name of God. While commencing a task, the Muslims say 'ba+ismi+allah (Bismillah), meaning with the Name of God and on completion they say, 'haz (this is completed), min (with) fazl grace of, rabbi (God)', meaning this is done with the grace of God.
5. *Holocaust: Kashmiri Pandits in Exile — When will the Trauma End?*, A report prepared by Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch. p. H21.
6. GM Sofi's interview reproduced in *The Migrant* News Letter, Vol 3, Issue 3, March 1998.
7. *Report on the Impact of Migration on the Socio-economic Conditions of Kashmiri Displaced People*, Jammu and Kashmir Centre for Minority Studies.
8. Jagmohan, *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*, (Allied Publishers, Third Edition, 1993) pp. 495–496.

15

EXODUS

"It is not the road ahead that wears you out - it is the grain of sand in your shoe."
—Arabian Proverb

The grain of sand in the shoe of Pandits was the tortuous memory of an environment wherein acquaintances, neighbours, friends, colleagues, co-workers, business partners, teammates and class-fellows turned into their (Pandits') actual killers or their collaborators. The



Destroyed and abandoned Pandit houses on the eastern bank of kuta kohl near Kani Kadal, Srinagar, as seen in April, 2000.

grain of sand in the shoe of Pandits was also a bleak future that stared them in the face.

In this atmosphere of irrationality, obscurantism and religious fanaticism, Pandit men were killed and their womenfolk lost their dignity, only because they belonged to a different faith; a complete antithesis of Kashmiri Muslims' avowed faith in the teachings of Noor-ud-Din Noorani (Nund Rishi). The Pandits well understood that the only iron-clad guarantee of their security and dignity lay in the voluntary and collective commitment of Kashmiri Muslims to their safety, security and welfare. After the Afghan rule, Kashmiri Muslims, despite aberrations, did exactly that. But once they decided to renege on their voluntary commitment, there was no one around to save the Pandits. Therefore, what option did the Pandits have in such a situation in order to secure their safety and the dignity of their womenfolk? How could this essentially peace-loving, non-violent, liberal, and secular community, completely unarmed, forming roughly 9.6 per cent of the entire population of the Valley, and spread out in its numerous villages and towns, take on 90.4 per cent of the population, whose young men were armed to the teeth, and who enjoyed all kinds of moral and material support from Pakistan?

In the absence of any organised decision-making mechanism within the community, and no visible measures being taken by the government, both at the State and Central level, to save them from being completely annihilated, every individual took his own decision. The most important and common feature of that decision was to escape to a safer place. The die was cast. The history was about to witness the seventh exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir valley, ever since the arrival of Islam there. The most regrettable thing about it was that it happened in independent, secular and democratic India that claims Jammu and Kashmir to be its integral and inalienable part.

What started as a trickle after the events of the night of January 19, 1990, now became a deluge. The gruesome treatment meted out to Kashmiri Pandits induced such an intense degree of fear and insecurity into the members of the beleaguered community, that 94 per cent of them fled spontaneously, without any prior planning, in the first five months of 1990 (between January to May). A significant chunk of this was formed of people from rural areas who depended on agriculture for their livelihood. The truck drivers and the taxi owners sensed an opportunity to make a killing out of the adversity of Pandits. With fear in their bruised hearts and tears streaming from their eyes, Kashmiri Pandits bade adieu to their homes, to the rows of the poplar trees in their lawns, to the river banks dotted with shikaras and *bhatctz*, to the magnificent chinars, to their livestock; to their almond trees in full bloom; to the snow covered Harmukh; to whatever was still left of *Kashmiriyat*, and above all, to all that their homeland represented, the land in which the ashes of their forefathers lay mingled. In some places the neighbours cried, but they mostly hid themselves, lest they be seen by the radical elements to be sympathising with the Pandits. Caravans of buses, trucks and taxies with puzzled and anguished men, women and children huddled together, looked like sheep being taken to the slaughter house; searching questions writ large on their faces.

Govt truck/vehicle	2 %
Private truck/vehicle	73.06 %
Private car	7 %
Bus	17.9 %

Type of transport used by Pandits to flee from the Valley

Source: *Report on the Impact of Migration on the Socio-economic Conditions of Kashmiri Displaced People;* Jammu and Kashmir Centre for Minority Studies.

The unrestrained killing of the Kashmiri Pandits was a well-planned and calculated move to ethnically cleanse the valley of the Hindus, with the aim of establishing *Nizam-e-Mustafa*, a step that would make its merger with Pakistan easier. By forcing the Pandits to flee, those who orchestrated these events, seemed to be succeeding in their mission.

As a first step, thousands of people sought shelter at 'Geeta Bhavan' in Jammu, while others headed straight for Delhi, to find shelter in similar camps. A large number of them were housed in hastily prepared refugee camps in Jammu and Delhi. Thousands of families had to live in these camps; in tattered tents under unlivable conditions. Little did they realise that over two decades later they would continue to live in those refugee camps. Most of them had left the Valley in panic and confusion, hoping that the situation would normalise, enabling them to return to their homes soon. Days, months and years rolled by, but their hopes remained unfulfilled. Most Kashmiri Pandits left behind everything they had in the Valley. A large number of them lost their near and dear ones in the violence, specifically directed at them.

Among Kashmiri Pandits there were many (mostly retired and old people) who had, as a routine, left the Valley to be with their children or other relatives living outside the Kashmir, to avoid the harsh winter. When they left in late December, they carried with them only the necessary clothing, etc., which would suffice them for the next few months, after which they would return to the Valley. It was during this period of their temporary absence from Kashmir that Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley were forced to flee. These people lost practically everything.

In the meantime, militancy had witnessed an upsurge with Pakistan gradually sidelining the JKLF and increasingly handing over the responsibility of carrying out militant operations to more radical

militant group, the HM. Their attacks on the security forces increased both in frequency and spread. Kashmiri Pandits, nevertheless, continued to be their targets, both individually and collectively. One of their victims was HN Wanchoo, a Kashmiri Pandit trade union activist, who had filed a number of petitions in Jammu and Kashmir High Court on behalf of the militant organisations against the security forces. He was also reportedly acting as an intermediary between the government and certain militant groups; negotiating to secure the release of their cadres. Wanchoo, perhaps felt that by taking up the 'cause' of militants, he would endear himself to the militant organisations. He thought that by taking on the new identity of a Human Rights activist, his identity as a Pandit would be subsumed and he would cease to be a target of Islamists. His thinking proved completely misplaced; he was silenced forever on December 5, 1992, by the militants of Jamiat-ul-Mujahideen.

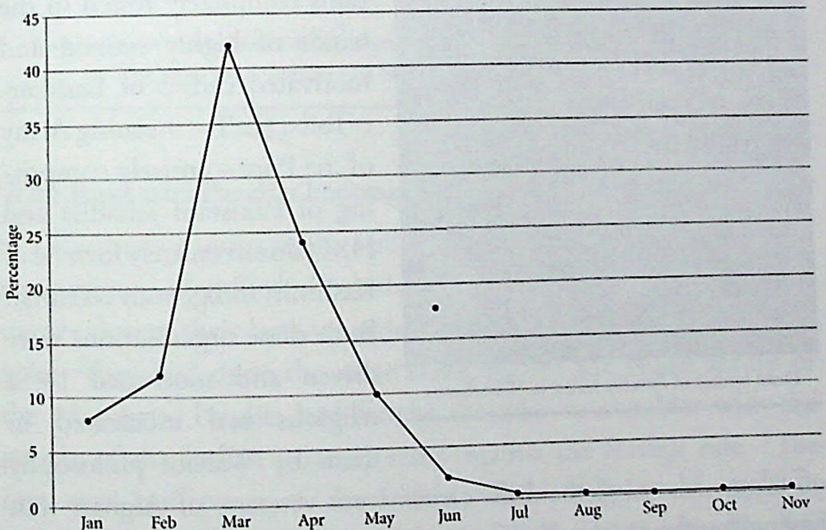
By and large, the exodus was completed in three waves. Describing these waves, Dr KL Chowdhury, a renowned doctor, working in the biggest government hospital of Srinagar at the time of exodus, writes on March 3, 1990, "This is the third wave of exodus. The first major



Some of the abandoned Pandit houses in Srinagar, as seen in April 2000.

wave passed soon after January 19, 1990, the blackest day for Pandits in modern times. Many who fled that terror, left almost barefooted in buses, trucks, taxis and private cars. Their properties back home have mostly been looted, some torched as well... There was a second wave of exodus on January 26/27, 1990, the Republic Day of India, when a renewed, more determined and savage attempt was made by the people in the Valley to repeat January 19, 1990. Now, I feel we are witnessing the last major wave during and soon after the present curfew, before the terrorists unleash another spate of killings of innocent Pandits."[1]

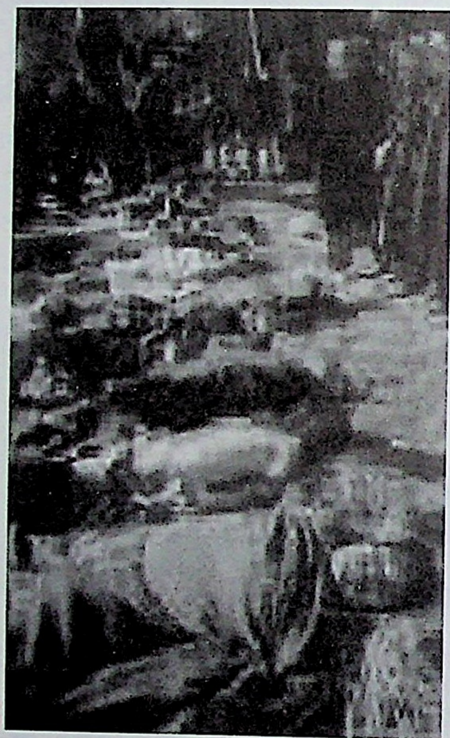
Most Kashmiri Pandits fled the valley in the first rush of exodus that took place immediately after the events of January 19, 1990, and continued throughout the year. By the end of 1990, most Pandits had already fled. As the killings continued unabated and government machinery continued to remain grounded to a halt, even those who had thought of sticking on in the Valley, irrespective of the situation,



Source: *Report on the Impact of Migration on the Socio-economic Conditions of Kashmiri Displaced People;* Jammu and Kashmir Centre for Minority Studies.

moved out. Meanwhile, the militancy continued to grow, attaining even more sinister and violent dimension. By the middle of the nineties, the Valley had almost completely been cleansed of the Pandits. Those who continued to live in Kashmir were spread out in penny packets, living under the constant threat of the gun.

Bulk of the Pandits left the Valley in roughly three waves between January 1990, to April, 1991. Most settled in Jammu, with Delhi emerging as the next preferred destination. Whatever numbers of families were still left in the Valley, chose to leave in small driblets thereafter, as violence against them continued unabated. By the middle of 2002, nearly 60,000 families had registered themselves at different places.



Dead bodies of Pandits killed in Wandhama

In the mean while, by the middle of the nineties, the responsibility of militant operations completely rested in the hands of highly trained and motivated cadres of Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT – meaning Army of the Pure – entirely comprising of Pakistani Jehadis) and HM (almost entirely formed of Kashmiri indigenous recruits). Both these organisations were driven and motivated by a religious zeal inculcated in them by Wahabi philosophy of Islam. Many of the LeT cadres were veterans of Afghan war, having fought against the Soviet forces there. Driven as they were by the sole desire of turning Kashmir into an Islamic entity, these

two militant groups could not even tolerate the presence of even a few thousand Kashmiri Pan'dits still left in the valley. Consequently, seven Kashmiri Pandits living in Sangrama village were killed in March 1997. This was followed by the incident of January 25, 1998, when 23 Kashmiri Pandits, including 4 children, 9 women and 10 men were killed in village Wandhama, in Ganderbal district. These incidents forced the remaining Pandits to flee and find a place in the already overcrowded refugee camps across the Pir Panjal range. As per government's version, even at this time, 1,000 Kashmiri Pandit families were still living in the Valley. In the next 10 years the "number of families in Kashmir would reduce to 611."[2]

Exodus Period

Year of Migrtion from Kashmir Valley	Percentage
1989	3.2%
1990	86.72%
1991	1.27%
After 1991	8.81%

Source: *Report on the Impact of Migration on the Socio-economic Conditions of Kashmiri Displaced People;* Jammu and Kashmir Centre for Minority Studies.

Why Kashmiri Pandits became the Targets of Islamists

Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley had completely and without any reservations, identified themselves with the aspirations of Indian masses during their long struggle for independence from the British yoke. They had done the same thing against the feudal set-up of the Maharaja. Pandits had fought shoulder to shoulder with the people of the Indian princely states against the foreign rule. "The first ever conference of the Indian States` People, convened in 1927, was presided over by a firebrand Kashmiri Pandit, Shankar Lal Kaul, who had left Kashmir after having been removed from

the State service on the advice of the British Resident."[3] During the conference, Kaul had demanded that the people of the princely states should oppose the princely order and appealed for their unity for a sustained struggle against the British rule. Subsequently, after a decade, this demand became an official part of the 'Charter of Demands' of this conference held at Ludhiana, when the conference appealed for repudiation of the paramountcy and the end of the princely rule in the states. During the formative years of the conference, another Kashmiri Pandit, Pandit Dina Nath Kachroo, a close friend of Jawahar Lal Nehru, became the Secretary General of the Conference. It was the same Pandit Kachroo who was arrested along with Pandit Nehru during the Quit Kashmir Movement. He attended the Working Committee meeting of the NC in October 1947, as All India States People's Conference representative, when the NC decided to support the State's accession with India. Some Kashmiri Pandits, like Pandit Kashyap Bandhu, actually joined the revolutionary underground, to achieve these objectives.

The State Subject certification, to which the Kashmiri Muslims are so deeply wedded today, was actually opposed by them when Kashmiri Pandits had launched a movement for its enactment, to forestall the British attempt at acquiring land in the state. On the one hand, Muslims opposed the Maharaja, and on the other, they supported the British. In the memorandum submitted to the Maharaja in the aftermath of 1931 agitation, they reaffirmed their loyalty to the British Crown. Islamists all along ensured that their struggle against the Maharaja retained its Islamic character. Vested interests, even within the mainstream parties, too allowed pan-Islamism to over-shadow the struggle against the Dogra rule.

Kashmiri Pandits had embraced the secular education in its totality and had, therefore, developed a progressive and liberal outlook, which was visible in their tolerance and forbearance in word and deed. It was they who tried to turn the struggle against the Dogra

rule into a non-sectarian mass movement. In 1938, Pandits and Muslims jointly issued a Declaration of National Demand, which later became the basis for the movement of self-government in the state. In its changed 'avatar' it became the manifesto of *Naya Kashmir* of the NC. Many prominent Kashmiri Pandits were in the forefront of the NC. These included, among other prominent community leaders, the renowned poet and scholar, Dina Nath Nadim. Kashmiri Pandits accepted everything; the snatching away of their landed estates, the confiscation of their properties, their exclusion from the state administration, their being rendered politically irrelevant, primacy of Muslims in politics, their economic marginalisation, Islamisation of all institutions, etc. All these sacrifices were willingly made in the hope that it will usher in genuine secularism in the state.

After independence, no community in India has suffered as much for its commitment to India and its unity, as Kashmiri Pandits have, till their exodus in 1990. They were accused by the anti-Indian segment of Kashmir population as being the principle conspirators of the accession of the State to India in 1947. In addition, Muslim intelligentsia held the Pandits responsible for the split in the MC in 1939, when the party's majority opted to form NC. This split, they felt, was engineered by the Pandits to rob the struggle against the Maharaja of its essentially Muslim character. But the truth is that, Pandits joined the NC after the party vowed to be guided by secular values and its membership was thrown open to all communities. Pandits felt that the NC programmes and policies were based on progressive political thinking. Being the most popular party in Kashmir, joining NC also fulfilled Pandits' desire to be part of the Valley's mainstream. They had hoped all along that the new political dispensation would maintain and strengthen its secular character with the passage of time.

When Plebiscite Front became a force to reckon with in the Valley, Kashmiri Pandits fought its pernicious separatist and communal

ideology. As the propagators of secularism, which Islam held as abhorrent to its ideology, Pandits became the obvious targets of its cadres. They also fought the Islamic fundamentalists who opposed the 1975 Sheikh-Indira Accord. Such stance adopted by Pandits over a period of time, marked them as enemies of the radical Muslims. To the Islamists, Kashmiri Pandits were also a constant reminder that despite resorting to the latter's ethnic cleansing on umpteen number of occasions in the past, they continued to come in their way of Islamising the Valley completely. Therefore, the push delivered to the community in 1990, when insurgency broke out, was meant to uproot the persistent resistance that Muslim communalism in Kashmir met at the hands of Kashmiri Pandits.

Uprooting Pandits; Gains for Islamists

By every reckoning, the Islamists stood to gain by evicting Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley. In their eviction, every segment of Kashmiri Muslim society and its mentor across the LoC, Pakistan, saw only gains accruing to it. At the macro level these were:-

- Eviction of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley would end the much feared secularisation of the Kashmiri Muslim society. With Kashmiri Pandits out of the Valley, the Muslims would now be more open and amenable to fundamentalist Islamic preaching. This, the radical elements felt, would be the first step in Islamising Kashmir; the avowed aim of the Islamists.

- The eviction of Kashmiri Pandits would destroy India's credibility among Kashmiri Muslims. This would embolden them to become even more belligerent and aggressive in demanding secession of Kashmir from India. This aggressive posture will eventually result in the separation of Kashmir from India. For Pakistan, it will make its task of gobbling up Kashmir easier and would be compensation enough for losing its Eastern Wing in 1971.

- Kashmir, devoid of Pandits, would result in snapping the psychological connect between the Indian State and the Valley. This objective could easily be achieved, as Article 370 had already paved the way for such disconnect. In due course of time, Indian feedback channels would completely dry up.

That the Islamists have succeeded in Islamising the entire Valley by cleansing it of non-Muslims is best illustrated by the census figures given below:

Division	Population	% Muslim	% Hindu	% Sikh	% Buddhist/ Others
Kashmir(53.9%)	5,476,970	97.16%	1.84%	0.88%	0.11%
Jammu (43.7%)	4,430,191	30.69%	65.23%	3.57%	0.51%
Ladakh (2.3%)	236,539	47.40%	6.22%	-	45. 87%
Jammu and Kashmir	10,143,700	66.97%	29.63%	2.03%	1.36%

Source: *Pioneer* dated July 12, 2010.

The dwindling population of Kashmiri Pandits, Kashmir's biggest minority, is even more glaring. According to census figures in 1981, the population of Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley was 15 per cent, which fell to 5 per cent in 1991 and to 0.01 per cent further down the years. According to a statement made by Raman Bhalla, a Minister in the State Government, in the State Assembly on March 23, 2010, "Only 808 families of Kashmiri Pandits were living in the Valley and the total number of men, women and children was 3,445... Killing of community members led to fear psychosis in the community." Such a massive demographic change could not have taken place in Kashmir without detailed planning at the highest level in Pakistan, backed and executed by its proxies in Kashmir."[4]

At the micro level, the Islamists hoped to achieve the following:-

- In the long run, the Kashmiri Muslims would get to own all the movable and immovable property left behind by Kashmiri Pandits.
- The Muslims would corner all the jobs vacated by the Pandits.
- The Kashmiri Muslims would become the sole beneficiaries of huge doles given by the central government to Kashmir.
- The Kashmiris would get to own and control all the businesses and commercial activity in the Valley.

In the past two decades after exodus, nearly all the goals already stand achieved by the Islamists.

Between 1989–1992, the militant violence tore the Kashmiri society apart. The spurt in militant violence can be gauged from the fact that whereas the number of terrorist acts reported in 1988 was 390, it went up to 4,971 in 1992. The attacks on security forces also registered a substantial increase in the said period; from just six in 1988 to 3,413 in 1992. Similarly, in 1988, only 36 AK-47 Rifles (or its later versions) were recovered, whereas in 1992, the recoveries were a whopping 3,775. With the Jehadi operations getting more extensive and widespread, as also because of far greater number of Jehadis getting inducted into the Valley, their masters sitting across the LoC, found it increasingly difficult to effectively exercise operational control over the militant cadres, over huge distances. To streamline the complex operational communication for effective control over various militant groups, the ISI set up a number of communication and broadcasting stations in PoK. Besides addressing the problem of effectively communication with various militant commanders in the Valley, these broadcasting stations were also used for psychological operations. These communication stations dished out communal propaganda in order to create hatred between the civil population and the security forces. One such broadcasting station, *Sada-e-Hurriyat*

(Voice of Hurriyat), churned out mischievous communal propaganda in local language that influenced the gullible and the devout, who would come out on the streets with increased frequency and greater virulence. The ISI's propaganda machinery and its handling of the media contributed immensely to the worsening situation in the Valley. Almost the entire press, both Indian and foreign, carried one-sided stories and even suppressed those which were not sympathetic to the militants and their cause. The most important of these was the suppression of the news of violence against Kashmiri Pandits, leading to their ethnic cleansing from the Valley.

What About Sikhs in Kashmir?

During July-August 2010, many Sikh families living in Kashmir received threats from the radical Islamists in the valley; they were told to either convert to Islam or leave the Valley. This created a furore in the Parliament, which at that time, was in session. Members cutting across party lines condemned these threats received by the miniscule Sikh community living in Kashmir. To Kashmiri Pandits, such assertions by the members of the Parliament were quite in contrast to the fact that not a voice was raised in the august house when Kashmiri Pandits received far more serious threats which were, subsequently, acted upon by the Islamists in 1998–90. Kashmiri Pandits were abandoned by both the Parliament and the political leaders.

Kashmiri Pandits are often asked to explain as to why Sikhs did not leave the Valley in 1989, when the former had to flee. Pandits have rarely expressed their opinion on the subject publically for two reasons; those in public life wanted to remain politically correct and others did not say anything which might have hurt this proud community or jeopardise their lives in the Valley. However, the narrative of this book will remain incomplete if this important issue is not addressed.

It was Zia-ul-Haque who fathered the initiation of insurgency in Kashmir in late eighties. In Phase-I of 'Operation Topac' the military dictator succeeded in creating huge turmoil in Punjab. By the time Kashmir reached a boiling-point (November-December 1989), large number of Sikhs, not only in Jammu and Kashmir but also in the rest of the country, were alienated due to the perceived success of the violence unleashed by Sikh militants to create the so-called Khalistan. In Jammu and Kashmir, this alienation was even more pronounced as the ever-present anti-Indian sentiment in Kashmir provided a conducive environment for such a feeling to grow. Also, Farooq Abdullah's anti-Mrs Gandhi stance had endeared him to 'Khalistani' lobby. To spite Mrs Gandhi, he had allowed the state to become a hub of Sikh militant activity. Despite the fact that his government was subsequently dismissed, it did not, however, make much difference to the seed that he had sown. By the time he left office, radicalised Sikh youth had found safe havens for their activities in the state. As a matter of fact, among the mainstream politicians of India, Farooq Abdullah was the most sought after leader by Bindranwale and vice versa.

Consequently, in the early eighties, the divide between Pandits and Sikhs became quite visible despite having enjoyed close friendly relations for scores of decades. The divide became even more pronounced after Mrs Gandhi's assassination, when Kashmiri Pandits took out a procession in Srinagar to mourn her death. The anti-Sikh riots that followed, sealed this hostility, even though Kashmiri Pandits neither played any role in it nor approved of it. By 1989, Sikhs in the Valley did not identify themselves with the aspirations of Pandits, but were more inclined towards Muslims, as the latter supported the idea of the creation of 'Khalistan'. The fact that some of the middle rung Sikh militant leaders belonged to Jammu region, further generated sympathy for the Sikhs among the anti-Indian, radicalised Kashmiri Muslims. Neeta, who today happens to be an important Sikh militant living in Pakistan, is also from Jammu.

The JKLF, which spearheaded the insurgency in Kashmir in 1989, felt no need to target Sikhs as that would have unnecessarily alienated them. As far as Pakistan, which controlled the levers of militancy in Kashmir, was concerned, directing its cadres in Kashmir not to target Sikh community was a strategic decision. Targeting of Sikhs by the militants would have hit at the very core of Pakistan's tactics, i.e., projecting itself as the benefactor of Sikhs and the community's supporter in its aim of carving out ' Khalistan'. Pakistan also realised that the presence of Sikh community in Kashmir would earn it great dividends in India itself, as such a posture could be exploited to project Kashmiri upsurge as secular in nature. It felt that any claim or even insinuation to the effect that the movement in Kashmir is communal in character, would be effectively countered by pointing out the continued safe presence of Sikhs in Kashmir. Projecting the Kashmiri movement as secular and by manipulating Indian media, Pakistan ensured that the leftists, liberals, secularists and human-rights groups within India would help Pakistan divert attention from the brutalities indulged in by its cadres against the Pandits in Kashmir. Pakistan also calculated that this argument would polarise Indian public opinion on secular/ communal lines, thus shifting the focus away from ethnic cleansing of Pandits, to the existing political fault-lines within Indian polity itself.

Despite all the bonhomie existing between the Sikhs and the Muslims of the valley in 1989–90, the events of the night of January 19–20, 1990, scared the daylights out of the valley's Sikh community. As Ashok Tikoo of Kani Kadal, an eyewitness to the events states, "On the night of January 19–20, 1990, all Muslims of Kashmir were on the roads while anti-Indian/anti-'Batta' (Kashmiri Pandit) propaganda tapes were being played from the loudspeakers of numerous mosques of Kashmir. This scared the non-Muslims of the valley to death. Next day morning, I had to go to Lal Chowk; I do not remember why. I was shocked to see Sikhs with their families

boarding trucks and buses in great hurry. Some were carrying their turbans in their hands and running to catch the buses/trucks leaving for Jammu. Kashmiri Pandits were clearly outnumbered in getting out of the valley. However, the situation changed dramatically after Simranjit Singh Mann visited Kashmir and had a meeting with Kashmiri separatist leaders. Most of those who had fled, returned to Kashmir. Some Sikhs did not return and preferred to stay at Nanak Nagar in Jammu. Even today, they travel back and forth between Jammu and Srinagar; their families, however, continue to reside at Jammu even today."

This, in short, is why Sikhs were not targeted in Kashmir then and continued to live there despite Pandits leaving en masse. You might ask, "Why did they receive threats two decades after the break out of insurgency in Kashmir? The answer is pretty simple. The movement has come to be entirely hijacked by the Syed Ali Shah Geelani, whose stance from day one has been to amalgamate Kashmir with Pakistan. Being a radical Islamist to the core and the patron/creator of HM, he has no use for 'Non-Believers'. According to him Amarnath agitation in 2008 was launched by him *Bara-e-Islam* and he sees the 'yatra' as a "cultural invasion of Islamic Kashmir by Hindus of India."According to his cadres, they have only one relationship with Pakistan, which is defined by the oft-repeated slogan — *Pakistan se kya Rishta — La Illah-e-Illalah*. (Our relationship with Pakistan is because Pakistan is Islamic State and we too are Muslims). Besides, Khalistan movement is dead and Sikhs, as usual, are in the forefront of India's march ahead, incidentally, under a Sikh Prime Minister. Despite the alienation of eighties, they have been and continue to be firmly with India as its most patriotic citizens.

Pakistan has miserably failed to drive a permanent wedge between the Sikhs and the rest of Indians. So, neither Pakistan nor the likes of Geelani would want them in Kashmir any more. Besides, imagine the numerous benefits that will accrue to Kashmiri Muslims if Sikhs were to be thrown out. Fleeing Sikhs will

have to abandon their immovable property, which will be grabbed by Muslims. If they do not abandon it, they will, at best, have to sell it at throw away prices (distress sale). Both ways, Kashmiri Muslims stand to gain. The Muslims will fill up all the posts in both government and private offices in Kashmir, which are presently held by Sikhs, and which will fall vacant as a result of their fleeing away. Kashmir will become entirely Islamic, perhaps the most cherished goal of Islamists like Geelani. Sikhs living in the valley realise all this, as one of them once told me during my stay in Pattan in 2008, "We are aware of the threats to our existence here. Therefore, every Sikh family presently in Kashmir has a functional residence in Jammu or other places. We only have to light the gas stove to cook our meals. We are prepared for any eventuality."

Reactions to Exodus

Pakistan, its accomplices in the Valley and the radical Islamic parties had correctly assessed the reaction of the Indian State; its administrative machinery, the civil society, political parties and the media. The muted reaction of the Indian State to the happenings of 1986, in Anantnag district, had convinced the Islamists that the reaction of India could be managed. As far as the press was concerned, the Islamists were confident that their own well-crafted and finely orchestrated disinformation campaign, would neutralise any negative fallout in the media. Their disinformation campaign had succeeded in obfuscating the reality by projecting the orchestrated tradition of Kashmiri Muslim's tolerance and faith in secularism. The civil society, dominated as it was by the left-liberal intellectuals, would not pose any serious challenge. In the opinion of the perpetrators of violence, the political parties in India, egged on by the media, were likely to get involved in the 'communal'/ 'secular' debate; in the process, masking the news about the violence let loose on Pandits in the Valley. Later events would prove that the assessment of Islamists

was almost entirely correct. The apathy with which all sections of the Indian society reacted, encouraged the radical elements and their armed militants to increase the tempo of violence. At the same time, indifferent attitude of the government, the civil society and the media towards the plight of Kashmiri Pandits, made the latter aware of the illusion of Indian secularism.

During the crucial period between the middle of 1989 and June 1991, India saw four prime ministers. Rajiv Gandhi, who was the Prime Minister till the end of 1989, contributed immensely to the deteriorating situation in the Valley. The political opportunism displayed by him created a tailor-made environment for Pakistan to exploit the situation to its advantage. Then followed VP Singh (December 1989 - November 1990), heading the Janata Dal Government. It was during his government at the Centre, when the actual exodus began. The government lacked the will and the competence to deal with the situation. Its Home Minister, Mufti Mohammad Syed, a Kashmiri Muslim, was too wedded to the concept of Muslim majoritariansim to intervene on behalf of the hapless Pandits. Besides, the ludicrous drama of the kidnapping of his daughter by the militants and his ministry's shameless surrender to them to secure her release, had robbed the government of whatever moral authority it still possessed.

After that followed Chandra Shekhar (November 1990-June 1991), who was dependant on the Congress party and other 'secularists' to stay in power. The weak government that he headed was determined to overlook the Islamic character of the violence unleashed against Kashmiri Pandits, in order to preserve its vote-banks. Consequently, the government took no action to issue orders to its security forces to prevent the killings of Kashmiri Pandits. And when the exodus of Pandits began, the fact was neither acknowledged, nor was a word of sympathy uttered to assuage their hurt feelings.

The attitude of these two governments encouraged the Islamists to further increase the tempo of their violence, destroying whatever was left of the pluralistic fabric of Kashmiri society. It may be mentioned that even though the Kashmiri Pandits exercised no influence on the politics and economy of the state, their immense contribution to Kashmiri thought and its culture had created pockets of composite culture in the valley. It was these pockets which became the first targets of the militant propaganda.

Initial reaction at every level of the government, most of civil society and the major portion of media was that of total indifference to the plight of Kashmiri Pandits. To them, Kashmir only represented Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits were just an irritant, whose removal from the Valley would pave the way for complete integration of the state with India! To the fleeing Kashmiri Pandits, the bigger shock than their forced displacement, was the manner in which this displacement and their killings, were brushed under the carpet. The media played an ignominious role in ensuring that bulk of the Indians remained oblivious to the ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir. In fact, in the first decade after the exodus, the only thing bulk of Indians related to with Kashmir was the so-called excesses of the security forces. Many Kashmiri Hindus were aghast at the ignorance of their friends, neighbours and colleagues, when the former had to explain to them the reasons why they could not go back to their native place. It was only much later, when Kargil incursion by Pakistan took place in 1999, and terrorism spread to various parts of the country, that the magnitude of the overwhelming tragedy that had befallen the Kashmiri Pandits, slowly dawned on the countrymen.

In its bid to neutralise the public opinion in India, all organs of the state and the media were exploited by the Islamists and their sympathisers to launch a vigorous campaign of disinformation. On many occasions; it was the Pandits who came to be portrayed as villains and

not the gun-wielding Jehadis in Kashmir. In fact, the latter were portrayed as the victims of high handedness of the Indian security forces. In order to exonerate the Jehadis of the crime of evicting Pandits from Kashmir, the propaganda machinery of the terrorists, working in cahoots with the so-called 'Human Rights' groups in India and abroad, spread the most nefarious falsehood that it was Jagmohan (the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir till July 1989 and then again from January to May 1990), who had asked the Pandits to leave the valley, so that he could then unleash his security forces on the local Muslims without having to care for any collateral damage. These elements even reminded the public about the demolitions that Jagmohan had carried out during the 'Emergency Regime' in the Turkman Gate area of Delhi, where mostly the Muslims reside.

The Congress party was in the forefront of this campaign of falsehood, conveniently forgetting that it was Congress' own iconic leader, Indira Gandhi, who headed the 'Emergency Regime.'[5] Benazir Bhutto, the Prime Minister of Pakistan at that time, publically lampooned Jagmohan and bayed for his blood from across the border. "Her hysterical ranting on Kashmir and crude gestures to dismember Jagmohan"[6] turned the latter into the single biggest hate-figure for the 'secularists' and their camp followers. Giving vent to his anguish, Jagmohan writes in his book, *My Forzen Turbulence in Kashmir*, "From the very first day of my second term, I had to wage not only the most grim and critical battle against terrorism, but also an equally extensive and dangerous battle against disinformation. I could hold my own, and even win the first battle, but not the second, such were the dimensions, frequency and the fury of the avalanche of insinuation."

The gullible public in India, fed by the biased media and the furious and sustained propaganda launched by the left-liberal intelligentsia, actually started believing in this myth; repeated umpteen times in true Goebellesion manner. However, even among

such segments, courageous people did not buy this theory. As Khushwant Singh, the doyen of Indian liberal journalistic fraternity, said, "Even mice don't leave their holes even when the forest over ground catches fire, and you want people to believe that Kashmiri Pandits left their homes, where they lived for thousands of years, just because Jagmohan asked them to do so."

Even two decades after their exodus from Kashmir, the Government of India continues to be in denial about Pandit exodus and its causes. Writing about the indifference shown by the Government of India to the plight of Kashmiri Pandits, Vir Sanghvi, a well-known journalist states, "The fate of the Pandits is an international scandal by any standards. Between 1989 and 1992, the majority of Kashmiri Pandits were forced out of their homes by militants. Men were murdered, women were raped, property was destroyed and threats were issued. It was made clear to the Pandits



An abandoned Pandit house at Magam

that they were no longer welcome in Kashmir, a state that constituted the only home they knew because they were Hindu."

Sanghvi further writes, "Forget about the international community, even our own government has remained curiously indifferent to the Pandits. There has been no serious attempt to resettle them. Lakhs of people have lost everything and have been reduced to poverty, swallowing their pride and living on hand-outs in refugee camps. But few politicians across parties seem to feel that this is a national shame and that India owes it to the Pandits to give them their pride back." Writing about the nation's failure in recognising the tragedy of Kashmiri Pandits, the writer mentions, "Sadly, both India and democracy itself have failed them. Nobody pays any attention to their cause. And politicians do not regard them as electorally significant enough to merit any concern."[7]

G.M. Sofi, a well-known journalist from the Valley, when asked for his views on the issue said, "They (Kashmiri Pandits) were compelled to leave their homes, their jobs and their lands overnight. In fact, Pandits were the first victims of the scheme (the aim of Pakistan to Islamise the Kashmir problem) which forced them to leave the State."[8]

Basharat Peer, the author of much acclaimed book dealing with the turmoil in Kashmir, *Curfewed Night,* writes "Alongwith killing hundreds of pro-India Muslims ranging from political activists to suspected informers for Indian intelligence, the militants killed hundreds of Pandits on similar grounds, or without reason. The deaths had scared the Pandits and thousands, including my classmates and their families, had left the Valley by March 1990, for Jammu, Delhi, and various other Indian cities and towns."[9] If any more clarification was required, it was provided by no less than the former Deputy Chief Minister of the State, Muzafar Hussein

Beigh, who on November 15, 2010, stated in Jammu, "I will not give names. But it is true that many people who killed Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims in Kashmir are roaming freely. I do not know whether it is the judicial system which has failed or the police system which has failed or there is some hidden hand, or they want to use them for some purpose. I do not know."[10]

Surprisingly the same elements, who did not tire of leveling false allegations against the security forces,[11] found nothing wrong with the eviction of nearly 400,000 Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley, or their brutal massacre in cold blood. Or for that matter the heavy casualties that security forces have suffered during the past two decades, while fighting the Pakistani Jehadis in Kashmir. Between July 1988 and July 2010, 5,962 security personnel were killed by terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir. In the first half of 2010 alone, 45 were killed while fighting militants.

The attitude of intellectuals and media to the plight of Kashmiri Pandits has been aptly summed up by the former Foreign Secretary MK Rasgotra:

"Our own Human Rights enthusiasts, ever ready to smear the image of our armed forces engaged in fighting Pakistan's dirty proxy war in Kashmir, have done little to highlight Pandit's plight. Worse still, our media's casual, almost cynical treatment of this slow motion tragedy, thoughtless and repeated description of these victims of denial, deprivation and terror as 'refugees' has inured the country to this grevious wrong. It dulled the Nation's sense of responsibility towards an abused and aggrieved minority and lulled the authorities into complacency and inaction."[12]

The angst and anguish of Kashmiri Pandits was most poignantly put across in the appeal issued by 'Save Kashmiri Pandit Campaign Committee,' "...Must we tell these partisans that nothing is more

distasteful to a Kashmiri Pandit than even the remotest thought of leaving the land which he loves only as a son would love his mother?" It further said, "The choice was forced on us by Pakistan-led terrorists who have imposed their writ on Kashmir, taking an unending toll of innocent human lives and wrought death and destructions...."[13]

Wilson John wrote in the *Pioneer* of July 19, 2007, "....The fact that Muslim terrorists and their sympathisers systematically kept driving out more than 300,000 (some say 500,000) Hindus from their homes for over five years, even as India, the largest democracy in the world and one of the most powerful military powers in Asia, looked the other way..." In 2004, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, while addressing a conference on Kashmiri Pandits in New Delhi acknowledged their plight when he said, " What has happened to the Pandit community in the Valley is a great national tragedy. I would say a great human tragedy. Therefore, whatever can be done to relieve their pain and suffering is in the wider national interests... The long-term objective has to be to enable the Pandit community, and all those who want to go back to the Valley, to return and lead a life of dignity and self respect." However, despite such a statement from the highest in the government, nothing substantial has been done to give concrete shape to the Prime Minister's declaration.

Nearly two decades after the exodus of Pandits when the passions for Jehad had cool down and Kashmiri youth were looking for better career opportunities, various political parties including some mainstream and extremist organisations, issued statements inviting Kashmiri Pandits to return to the Valley. Reacting to these statements, Omar Abdullah, the scion of Abdullah family and the State's Chief Minister said, "It is very easy to say that we will lay down our lives to bring KPs (Kashmiri Pandits) back to the Valley, and I appreciate the sentiment, as I am sure the KPs reading it, will. Pity, that sentiment was missing when our mosques were being used to drive these people

out. None of us was willing to stand up and be counted when it mattered. None of us grabbed the mikes and said this is wrong and KPs had every right to continue living in the Valley. Our educated well-to-do relatives and neighbours were spewing venom 24 hours a day. We were mute spectators, either mute in agreement or mute in abject fear; because the guns turned against the Pandits, found their target elsewhere, as my party workers found, but mute nonetheless." This statement appeared in the National Conference website and was reproduced by Kashmir Times on May 30, 2008.

US Reaction

It is worthwhile to take a look at the attitude of the US towards the activities of ISI in Kashmir, where it was involved in letting loose a reign of terror and spilling of the innocent blood. The US turned a blind eye to the ISI-perpetrated violence in Kashmir. Due to its own compulsions of being dependent on the ISI to prosecute its war in Afghanistan, the US closed its eyes to the large-scale diversion of its funds and other aid by the former to fund its anti-India activities. After the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, the US lost interest in South Asia. Nevertheless, it was fully aware of ISI's role in fomenting trouble in the Punjab and later in Kashmir. But it chose not to needle its long time ally.

Canadian intelligence sources confirmed that neither FBI nor CIA provided any useful assistance to the Canadian investigating agencies during the investigations of the *Kanishka* bombing. As a matter of fact, the US seemed to be happy with the turn of events in South Asia, as would be apparent from perusal of Barbara Crossett's report in the *New York Times*, at the commencement of Pakistani sponsored Islamist insurgency in Kashmir, in 1990. Premen Addy writes, "The report reveals the prognostication of an unnamed Islamabad-based western diplomat, that the world was about to witness a permanent shift in the sub-continental balance of power. The prediction, mercifully, was as

still-born as the Nixon administration's hope of similar geopolitical change in the wake of its support for the Pakistani military dictatorship, in its war with India in December 1971."[14] As we move away further from those times, as also due to the proven and continued complicity of ISI in spreading terror globally, many 'think-tanks', independent organisations, and even the UN have accepted the fact that Pakistan's state-within-a-state, the notorious ISI, has continued to train, fund and patronise the LeT, that is used by it to target India (as a matter of state policy) and places around the world (as a matter of duty towards the Ummah).Talking about LeT, Frank J Cilluffo, Director of Homeland Security Institute at the George Washington University, said in his testimony to the US House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, "Its formation was supposedly aided by instruction and funding from Pakistan's intelligence agency, the Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence, which gave this support in exchange for the LeT promising to target Hindus in Jammu and Kashmir, and train Muslim extremists on Indian soil."[15]

Report dated April 16, 2010, prepared by the independent panel appointed by the UN to probe Benazir Bhutto's assassination, concluded that a nexus between ISI and various terrorist organisations continues to flourish. The report said, "The Pakistan military organised and supported the Taliban to take control of Afghanistan in 1996. Similar tactics were used in Kashmir against India in 1989." Referring to other Jehadi Sunni groups based largely in the Punjab, the report further said, "The Pakistan military and ISI also used some of these groups in the Kashmir insurgency after 1998. The bulk of the anti-Indian activity was and still remains the work of groups such as LeT, which has close ties with ISI."[16]

Notes

1. *Sakshatkar*, Published by Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch, (Chapter titled Holocaust).
2. Sanjay Tikoo, Convenor, Kashmiri Pandit Sangharsh Samiti (KPSS) in a statement in

Rising Kashmir, April 1, 2009.

3. *White Paper on Kashmir,* Dr MK Teng and CL Guddu for Joint Human Rights Committee, (Gupta Print Services, Delhi), p. 67.
4. India News, *IANS, (Indo-Asian News Service)*, downloaded from *Kashmir Interchange @ Yahoogroups.com,* March 25, 2010.
5. After wide-spread protests against Mrs Indira Gandhi's refusal to resign, consequent to an adverse verdict given against her by Allahabad High Court, on a petition filed by her electoral opponent, Raj Narain, Mrs Gandhi declared a state of emergency in the country.
6. Sandhya Jain, *Pioneer*, November 22, 2011.
7. *Both India and Democracy itself have Failed the Kashmiri Pandits*, Vir Sanghvi, kashmir_forum@googlegroups.com posted on January 20, 2012.
8. From interview by Omkar Razdan, *Times of India*, November 9, 1997.
9. Basharat Peer, *Curfewed Night,* (Random House, 2008).
10. *Pioneer*, November 16, 2010.
11. The magnitude of such accusations and their falsehood can be gauged from the fact that since 1990, security forces have faced 1,511 cases of human rights abuses. After investigation by various agencies, including the National Human Rights Commission, 1,473 were found to be false. As a result of these findings, 104 persons were punished for offences, wherever, culpability was established.
12. MK Rasgotra, *Indian Express,* August 26, 1995.
13. Jagmohan, *My Frozen Turbulence*: (Allied Publishers, 1993) pp. 495–496.
14. Premen Addy, *Pioneer*, August 9, 2008.
15. Quoted here from the excerpts of his testimony carried by *Pioneer*, September 28, 2011.
16. *Pioneer*, April 17, 2010.

16

MYTHS PERPETUATED TO JUSTIFY VIOLENCE

"The bigger the lie, the more people will believe it. Think of the press as a great keyboard on which the government can play."

—Joseph Goebbels

After the Pandit exodus from Kashmir, several myths were



Remnants of the author's gutted house in the foreground, as seen in April 2000. It was burnt in 1992.

perpetuated by vested interests to justify the violence let loose by Kashmiri Muslims on Pandits, that forced the latter to flee from the Valley. This book examines these:-

- Kashmiri Pandits were big landlords.
- Kashmiris are victims of wide economic disparity that exists between the Valley and the rest of the country.
- Kashmiris feel that their distinct Kashmiri Muslim identity is under threat from Hindu India, and that
- It was the former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Jagmohan, who asked the Pandits to leave the Valley.

Kashmiri Pandits were Big Landlords

By no stretch of imagination were Kashmiri Pandits big landlords. As mentioned in Chapter 10, thousands of Kashmiri Pandits were rendered destitute as the Big Landed Estate Abolition Act took away their only means of sustenance, without getting any compensation in lieu. The truth is that when this Act was passed in September 1950, about 24 families and three religious institutions owned a total of 518,811 kanals of land, with each owning more than 3,000 kanals. Ownership of this land in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh was 330,301, 152,924 and 65,586 kanals, respectively. In Kashmir, 152,924 kanals were owned by the following individuals/institutions:-

Sr. No	Name	Land owned (in Kanals)
1.	Shrimati Vidyawati	70,468
2.	Wazir Ramdas	19,368
3.	Wazir Tej Ram	4,665
4.	Sardar Kishan Singh	5,976
5.	Dewan Dhanpat Rai	7,754

6.	Thakhtir Kartar Singh	2,626
7.	Ahmad Mir	4,202
8.	Musmati Ashraf Begum	3,915
9.	Pandit Shyam Sunder Lal Dhar	10,412
10.	Pandit Balkak Dhar	5,144
11.	Raja Upender Krishen Kaul	8,162
12.	Khanqah Baba Siam-ud-din	5,856
13.	Ziarat Pir Dastgir	4,483

Source: DN Dhar; Where Kashmiri Pandits Big Landlords? Page 34, *Naad,* April 2012, Volume XXII, No. 04.

Six of the above land-owners in Kashmir (serial 1 to 6) belonged to Jammu and five (serial 7 to 11) belonged to Kashmir. Two religious institutions mentioned at serial 12 and 13 were located in Kashmir. Among the Kashmiri owners, two each were Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits and one a non-resident Kashmiri Hindu.

There also existed a practice of bestowing the ownership of huge chunks of land called Jagirs on favourite individuals by the rulers. This practice in Kashmir owed its origin to the time when Kashmir was ruled by Sultans. Among the Kashmiri Pandits, Miro Pandit had been granted Kamraj (Baramulla) as a Jagir by Emperor Jehangir, whom the former had freed from the captivity of Afghan ruler, Mahabat Khan. Miro Pandit, whose ancestors had fled to Dhar in Madya Pradesh, during the persecution of Pandits in Kashmir by Sultan Sikander, commanded the Golconda fort before finally being appointed as the chief of Noor Jehan's Army. However, by the time Sheikh Abdullah introduced the land reforms, this jagir had all but ceased to exist.

Dogra rulers continued with the tradition of bestowing Jagirs in Kashmir. But these were granted to non-Kashmiris; not a single

Kashmiri Pandit was granted any such favour. Some Kashmiri Pandits were *Chakdars*. During Maharaja Ranbir Singh's rule, as the land revenue dwindled, he granted some fallow land to some Hindus, who were required to pay revenue as per a fixed schedule. By 1950, the share of the produce of Chakdars had been reduced to a pittance due to various stringent conditions governing the inheritance of such lands.

Myth of Economic Disparity

The argument that it was economic deprivation of Kashmiri Muslims which forced the poverty-laden youth to take up arms, has been repeated *ad nauseam* by the vested interests. Pakistan and its sympathisers propagated this argument to camouflage the real intentions of the Islamists. The Indian political parties that supported this view did so to protect their vote banks. Population figures of various communities in the state, based on 1981 census, are given below. As the militancy broke out in Kashmir some years later, these population figures will serve as a benchmark to assess the 'truth' of the economic reality of the state.

Population	*Hindus*	*Muslims*	*Sikhs*	*Buddhists*	*Jains*	*Christians*
59,27,389	19,30,448	38,43,451	1,33,675	69,706	1,576	2,481
100 %	32.56 %	64.84 %	2.25 %	1.17 %	0.026	0.041

Source: *White Paper on Kashmir*, Dr MK Teng and C.L. Guddu for Joint Human Rights Committee.

The Hindu population shown above did not include 2,50,000 Hindu and Sikh refugees, which formed nearly 4.2 per cent of the population.

The total population of Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists (including 4.2 per cent of the refugees) was 40.18 per cent. Per capita growth from 1970–71 to 1985–86 went up from ₹ 548 crores to ₹ 2204

crores at current price and from ₹ 548 crores to 683 crores at constant price of 1970–71. Within the state, Kashmir with its overwhelming Muslim population, was allotted between 65–69 per cent of the financial resources, compared to 31–35 per cent to Jammu and Ladakh together.

The Kashmiri Muslims owned 97.4 per cent of the agricultural land. The Hindus and other minorities had to be content with 2.6 per cent of the remaining land, though they comprised 11 per cent of the population in Kashmir. The former owned 96 per cent of the fruit orchard acreage in Kashmir, against 2.8 per cent by Hindus. Similarly, the Kashmiri Muslims owned 98.7 per cent of karewas (highlands), growing saffron, compared to 0.03 per cent owned by Hindus. Besides this, the export of dry fruit (almonds and walnut) and precious walnut and willow wood, was completely monopolised by the Muslims. The Hindus had almost no share in it. There were nearly 48,100 orchard holdings, employing an estimated 800,000 people, out of which Kashmiri Pandits formed a minuscule number estimated to be less than 0.5 per cent. Due to its complete monopoly of Kashmir's agricultural sector, the Kashmiri Muslims appropriated 94 per cent of the subsidy paid by the state on horticulture, agriculture, agricultural implements, fertilisers, pesticides, etc. Hindus received less than 2.4 per cent of this subsidy.

98.9 per cent of the industries using electric power were owned by Muslims, with Hindus owning just 0.02 per cent. Same situation existed in handloom and handicraft industry in Kashmir, which was almost entirely owned by Muslims. This industry provided employment to 91,941 persons, nearly all of them Muslims. Hindus formed 0.4 per cent of the total employees. In 1985–86, when Muslims in the valley were getting radicalised, the membership of the handlooms and handicraft cooperative societies stood at 17,776.

Out of this, only 0.3 per cent was owned by Kashmiri Hindus. In the same year, out of the 46, 293 industrial units registered with the directorate of industries in Kashmir province, 98.7 per cent were registered in the name of Muslims and 0.01 per cent in the name of Hindus. 98.8 per cent of the total of 28,110 employees of the industries registered under Khadi and Village Industries Board, were Muslims.

In the absence of railway network in the state, road transport played a vital role as the primary source of travel and communication within and outside the Valley. Even in this sector, the ownership of the transport and transport companies was monopolised by Muslims, with Sikh ownership standing at 4.2 per cent. The Hindus of Kashmir were negligible stakeholders in the transport sector. In 1985–86, even in the state-owned Jammu and Kashmir State Road Transport Corporation (JKSRTC), Kashmiri Hindus accounted for only 0.8 per cent of its total number of 6,434 employees. The state government had floated some schemes for providing loans (and subsidies on such loans) for establishing industries, self-employment enterprises, exports unit, handicraft and small scale units (and purchase of land for such enterprises, etc.). The beneficiaries of these schemes were almost entirely Kashmiri Muslims, with Hindus receiving barely 0.1 per cent of the entire amount.

Boats of various types and sizes played an important role in transportation through inland waterways and in tourism industry of the state. The entire fleet of these boats, including the luxury houseboats, was owned by Muslims. Number of various types of boats existing and the employment provided by these in 1985–86, are given in the chart below. Today (July 2011) the number of luxury houseboats is little over 1,200.[1]

	Type of Boats	Quantity	Number of Persons Employed
1.	Tourist House Boats	825	3,300
2.	Passenger Boats	1,152	2,304
3.	Carriage Boats	685	1,037
4.	Fishing Boats	480	960
5.	Passenger Boats (Tourist Doonga)	275	825
6.	Taxi Boats	785	1,570
	Total	4,202	9,996

The tourist industry in Kashmir also depended heavily on the network of hotels. 96 per cent of these hotels were owned by Kashmiri Muslims, compared to 2.2 per cent owned by Hindus.

Even in the awarding of contracts for various developmental projects, including public works, Kashmiri Hindus, at an average, received about 4 per cent of these. Similarly, till 1979, when the contracts for the exploitation of forest products were given to private individuals, the Hindu share of receiving these contracts was only 6.2 per cent. After 1979 these were nationalised. Other income generating sources, like issue of licenses for quarrying, mining of marble, establishing brick kilns and manufacture and export of carpets and shawls, were completely in the hands of Kashmiri Muslims.[2]

For years the vested interests carried out a sustained propaganda that the State of Jammu and Kashmir lagged behind other states of India economically, as it faced step-motherly treatment from the Central government. However, the facts indicated otherwise. In the crucial years preceding the outbreak of violence in Kashmir, the state was (and continues to be) way ahead of other states, on every parameter that determines the economic well-being of a state. In fact, Kashmiris themselves find the 'theory of their economic deprivation' as the cause of their uprising, as laughable. After all, economically deprived people are not voracious meat eaters, as Kashmiris are.

"On an average, 3.5 million goats are slaughtered annually for consumption in Kashmir."[3]

During militancy, Kashmir has prospered economically and is far better placed than most other states of India. Besides Punjab, Kashmir is the only other place, where most agricultural operations are undertaken by hired labourers from Bihar and Orissa since long. Among other things, it is the only place where education is free from elementary to professional and university level; where per capita saving and per capita consumption of animal proteins is the highest in India; it also ranks highest in the expenditure incurred on clothing. It is also, perhaps, the only place where everybody owns a house. Some other parameters too are revealing. According to the study carried out by National Sample Survey Organisation in 2009, the average household has assets worth almost ₹ 11,00,000 the highest in the country. Kerala follows with the average household assets being worth a little over ₹ 7,51,000. Experts say that even though there are no major industries in the state, income is more evenly distributed in Jammu and Kashmir than in any other part of the country. Says Haseeb Drabu, former Chairman of Jammu and Kashmir Bank, "It's the only place in the world where the most radical land reforms were initiated in a non-communist regime. It even pre-dates the land reforms carried out in Kerala. Therefore, you find that average Kashmiri's asset base is much better than the average person in the rest of the country. Agrarian sector, especially horticulture, is doing well. Land has provided a resilient economy."

It was believed that economically Kashmir is so heavily dependent on tourist industry that the disturbed conditions during the past two decades would destroy its economy. But these beliefs have been proved unfounded. The disturbed conditions in the valley have, if anything, improved the economic well-being of the people in the state. Even though the tourist industry crumbled due to rising militancy in nineties, the economy did not collapse and land

prices continued to rise. "There was an impression that Jammu and Kashmir survives only on tourism, and once tourism goes down, the economy will crumble. It's not so. There is very large agrarian sector, which has done very well," said Haseeb Drabu. "Since the beginning of militancy in 1990, the state has managed to get the lion's share of Central resources; ₹ 35,571.3 crores in grants and assistance."[4] "Between 2000–2003, it got ₹ 13,188 crores which is more than three times what India's poorest state, Bihar, got; ₹ 4,047 crores. When you consider that of the ₹ 14,085 crores net resource transfer by the centre, ₹ 13,188 crores was grant, you will get an idea of the magnitude of dole that Jammu and Kashmir gets. A similar economic revival plan for Bihar would amount to ₹ 47,458 crores!"[5] (See Table 1 and 2 below):-

Table 1: Economic Profile

Description	Bihar	Jammu and Kashmir	Orissa	National Average
Per Capita Income (₹)	5,108	12,399	8,547	16,707
10th Plan Per Capita Allocation (₹)	2,536.23	14,399.21	5,177.11	5,667.57
Grants from the centre 2000–03 (₹ Crores.)	4,047.3	13,187.7	5645.0	4916.1
Net Resource Transfer from the centre 2000–03 (₹ Crores)	2,1454.1	14,085.3	14,224.9	-
Credit Deposit Ratio in 2002 (%)	21.3	35.9	42.4	62.3
Population Below Poverty Line	42.6	3.48	47.15	26.1

Source: Planning Commission, Government of India, Reserve Bank of India, State Finances 2002–03 and Statistical Outline of India 2002–03.

Table 2: Prime Minister's Economic Package applied to two Most Backward States

Population	Description	₹ (Crore)
10,143,700 (Jammu and Kashmir)	Total Funding to Jammu and Kashmir (4 Years)	5,800
	Per Capita Share of Total Funding	5718 (₹)
36,804,660 (Orissa)	Justifiable Funding to Orissa on the basis of J&K (4 Years)	21,045
82,998,509 (Bihar)	Justifiable Funding to Bihar (4 Years)	47,458
	Per Year Funding to J&K	1450
	Per Year Funding to Orissa	5,261.25
	Per Year Funding to Bihar	11,864.5

Source: Census of India 2001 and Calculation on the basis of available figures.

A Kashmiri understands quite well the massive economic benefits that accrue to him as a result of his being part of India. "A Kashmiri gets eight times more money from the centre than citizens from other states. While per capita central assistance to other states moved from ₹ 576.24 in 1992–93 to ₹ 1,137 in 2000–2001, that of a Kashmiri spiralled from ₹ 3,197 to ₹ 8,092."[6]

"To put this in perspective; if the aid given by the Central government to the State were to be distributed to each family (of 5 persons); they would get ₹ 40,460 every year. Per capita consumption has also shot up from ₹ 134/month in the eighties to ₹ 746/month in 2000."[7] It is interesting to note that Jammu and Kashmir has the lowest poverty level in India: in 1990, the percentage of people 'below poverty line' (BPL) was 25.17 per cent, which dropped to 3.48 per cent in 2000. Compare this with 26.10 per cent in whole of India. This, despite the fact that the State's contribution was less than 1 per cent of the GDP in 2000–2001. "In 2001–2002, the state

spent ₹ 7516.6 crores, of which ₹ 4,577, (or 60 paise of every rupee spent came from centre). The state's non-developmental expenditure was ₹ 2,829 crores, including its salary bill of ₹ 1,193 crores, while its own revenues were barely ₹ 1,095 crores. The state could not have paid even the wages of its employees without the centre's help."[8] In other states, central assistance comprises 70 per cent debt and 30 per cent aid; in Jammu and Kashmir it is 90 per cent aid and 10 per cent debt. Later, even this 10 per cent debt was converted in to aid. In fact, the centre is funding the complete Five-Year-Plan of ₹ 11,400 crores.

Table 3: Population Below Poverty Line (1973–2000)

States	1973–74	1977–78	1983	1987–88	1993–94	1999–2000
Bihar	61.91	61.55	62.22	52.13	54.96	42.06
J&K	40.83	38.97	24.24	23.82	25.17	3.48
Orissa	66.18	70.07	65.29	55.58	48.56	47.15

Source: Census of India.

The state is also quite well off in other socio-economic fields as indicated by the following facts:-

- Its literacy level at 64.8 per cent and sex ratio of 923/1000 is almost at par with the national level of 65.4 per cent and 933/1000 respectively.
- Its birth rate of 19.9/1000 is lower than the national average of 25.8/1000. So is its death rate; 5.4/1000 for the state compared to 8.5/1000 of the national average.
- Jammu and Kashmir's infant mortality rate (45/1000) is also superior to the national average (68/1000). See Table:-

Table 4: Demographic Profile

Description	Bihar	Jammu and Kashmir	Orissa	National Average
Literacy Rate (%)	47.0	64.8	63.1	65.4
Sex Ratio/per 1000 males	921	923	972	933
Birth Rate/per 1000 persons	30.9	19.9	23.1	25.8
Death Rate/per 1000 persons	8.8	5.4	10.5	8.5
Infant Mortality Rates per 1000 persons	67	45	98	68
Life Expectancy Rate	Male (63.6) Female (62.1)	Combined (61.0)	Male (58.5) Female (58.1)	Male (63.9) Female (66.9)

Source: Census of India 2001 and UNDP

The official per capita income of Jammu and Kashmir in 2002–2003 was ₹ 12,399. This was lower than the national per capita income of ₹ 16,707. But it is much higher than many other states; Bihar — ₹ 5108, Orissa — ₹ 8547. "For the 10th Five Year Plan, the state got a per capita allocation of ₹ 14,399 whereas Bihar and Orissa got ₹ 2,536 and ₹ 5177 respectively, while the national average was only ₹ 5668."[9]

The Jammu and Kashmir Government employs 350,000 people, which translates to 34.5 government employees for every thousand persons. Rajasthan Government on the other hand, employs less than double the number of people, despite being about five and half times bigger than Jammu and Kashmir in terms of population.

Table 5: Government Employee Status

States	J&K	Rajasthan
Population	10,143,700	56,507,188

Per Capita Income (₹)	12,399	11,978
Number of Govt. Employees (Lakhs)	3.5*	6.0**
Govt. Employees per 1000 Population	34.5	10.6

Source: Census of India and Statistical Outline of India, 2003–04
*www.jammukashmir.nic.in. (Website of Govt. of J&K).

**Rajasthan Plans Computer Training for Employees, 8.11.2004; Indo-Asian News Service, Jaipur.

"In 2002–2003, it raised a mere ₹ 936 crores by way of taxes and had total non-tax revenue of ₹ 4,745 crores. Bihar collected ₹ 2,814 crores by way of taxes and had total non-tax revenue of ₹ 2,062 crores. Quite clearly, therefore, the nation's munificence is lavished upon Jammu and Kashmir."[10] This appears quite unfair considering the fact that "the State government's accounts have not been audited for over a decade. No one knows what was spent where and who got what."[11]

Table 6: Tax Mobilisation in States in 2002–03 (₹ Crores)

States	Total Tax Revenue	State's Own Tax Revenue	Total Non-Tax Revenue	State's Own Non-Tax Revenue	State Gross Domestic Product
Bihar	9,935.6	2813.7	2061.9	331.9	72083.92
J&K	1752.1	935.5	4745.2	322.8	-
Orissa	6353.6	2880.0	3249.3	833.8	38013.83

Source: State Finances, Reserve Bank of India, 2002–03

Note: Tables 1 to 6 have been reproduced from a report authored by Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPAS); a privately funded think-tank focussed on the study and review of Public Policy in India

All security-related expenditure of the State is also reimbursed to the State by the centre. 5,50,000 security forces personnel deployed

in the State have also contributed to the flourishing economy of the State. To add to their (Kashmiris) income, "Income Tax and Sales Tax are hardly ever paid and rarely demanded. The phenomenon pre-dates terrorism," says Anand K Sahay.[12]

According to National Sample Survey Organisation, urban parts of Jammu and Kashmir have prospered during the period of militancy. Jammu and Kashmir also has many other advantages compared to other states of India. It enjoys a far greater degree of autonomy than any other state in India through its own constitution and privileges guaranteed by Article 370 of the Constitution of India. Jammu and Kashmir did not bank with Reserve Bank of India, but with its own Jammu and Kashmir Bank, wherein it owned majority stake and from which it could obtain overdrafts. Recently this arrangement has undergone a change. Through an agreement that the State reached with the Reserve Bank of India on January 21, 2011, the latter "will undertake all its general banking business and act as its sole agent for investment."[13] This agreement came into effect from April 1, 2011.

As would be evident, terrorism itself has created a huge economy and powerful lobby of vested interests. For them, keeping the pot boiling makes great economic sense.

Valley's Dominance of State's Economy and Politics

Ever since its accession to India, the political dispensation governing Jammu and Kashmir, has been completely dominated by the of State's Muslim majority legislators who belong to the Valley. Irrespective of their party affiliations Kashmiri Muslim legislators zealously guard the interests of the Valley's Muslims. The Central government has all along been a willing and enthusiastic accomplice in this communal agenda of theirs. To quote an example, on March 25, 2011, a government order entitled Dogras of the State (basically from Jammu) to obtain a *Dogra Certificate* which envisaged some

relaxation in rules governing their recruitment into Central Para Military Forces, in terms of some physical measurements. However, the separatists created a hue and cry, terming it as a prelude to creating a *Duggar Desh* (Dogra State). Taking a cue from the separatists, the Muslim legislators then ganged up, with the active connivance of the Central government, to have the order revoked a month later; on April 28, 2011. That the State government had bowed in front of the separatist's communal agenda, supported by the Indian Government, was not the first such instance. It is because of this ganging up by Kashmiri Muslim legislators that the decks in every sector within the State are tilted heavily in favour of Kashmir.

Jammu comprises an area which is 70 per cent larger than Kashmir and has 45 per cent of the State's population. But Jammu has only 37 seats in the State Legislative Assembly, whereas Kashmir has 46. Jammu returns one member to the state legislature for 90,000 people, whereas in Kashmir, it is 73,000 people who return one such member. This, despite the fact that Jammu region has more registered voters (30,59,986) than the Valley (28,85,555). Average size of Parliament and Assembly seat (in terms of voters) in Jammu is 12,31,000 and 66,600 respectively; in the Valley these figures are 8,03,000 lakh and 52,400 respectively. Kashmir gets to elect three members for the Parliament and Jammu only two.

In late eighties, two million people visited Vaishno Devi Shrine every year compared to half a million tourists visiting Kashmir. Yet 90 per cent of the tourism budget was allotted to Kashmir.

Out of a total of 450,000 government/semi-government employees in the State, 330,000, come from the Valley. Jammu and Ladakh are grossly under represented; the former having only 15 per cent representation in the civil secretariat. At the secretary level, Jammu's share is 8 per cent. Ladakh's representation in civil secretariat is only 0.68 per cent. The unemployment figures in

Jammu and Ladakh are 69 per cent, which is far higher than that in the Valley, where it is 30 per cent (2006 figures). Between 1990 and 2006, state government employed 265,000 persons; only 345 of these were Kashmiri Pandits.

Jammu contributes 70 per cent of the State's revenue, whereas only 30 per cent of its total expenditure is incurred on it. Since 1996, the state created 155,000 job opportunities; Jammu got only 15,000 of these, remaining went to the valley. "At an average, 6000,000 tourists visit Jammu every year and only 200,000 visit Kashmir, yet 90 per cent of tourism expenditure goes to the Valley," says Dina Nath Mishra.

The discrimination against Jammu and Ladakh is further compounded when even developmental works are carried out with a heavy bias towards the Valley. As Dr Hari Om, writing in the *Indian Express* of July 17, 2002 states, "Chenani is the only power project in Jammu, producing a paltry 22 MW of power. The rest of the projects, Upper Jhelum, Lower Jhelum, Upper Sindh, Mohra and Ganderbal, etc. are all in the Valley, with a production capacity of 328 MW. While only ₹ 10 crores has been spent on Chenani project, ₹ 500 crores has been spent on the Kashmir plants." Major factories like the cement factory, Hindustan Machine Tools and telephone factory, are all located in Kashmir itself. Writing about the state of other infrastructural projects, Hari Om states, "Jammu has a total area of 26,293 sq kms and Kashmir 15,853 sq kms. In 1987, Jammu had 3,500 kms of roads, covering 18 per cent of this area, whereas Kashmir had 4,900 kms, covering more than 40 per cent of the area."

The tilt towards the Valley extends to even the number of professional colleges and technical institutes opened in the State. Whereas Kashmir boasts of Post-graduate Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences, dental college, veterinary college, Agriculture University, Regional Engineering College, the Artificial Limb Centre,

Institute of Hotel Management and Physical Training Institute: Jammu has one ill-equipped medical college and a small under-staffed engineering college which does not even have a full range of equipment. The agriculture and Ayurvedic colleges in Jammu have been closed down. In the admissions to Regional Engineering College and Agricultural University, the share of Jammu province is only 30 per cent.

Mata Vaishno Devi University was established in Jammu after the proposal was rejected by the government on many occasions, on one pretext or the other. Even when the proposal was finally accepted, the university was set up by the Vaishno Devi Trust, using funds collected from pilgrims. The Trust had to shell out ₹ 13 crores to purchase the land at commercial rates. On the other hand, Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University, set up as a counter move in Rajouri, was funded by the State Wakf Council headed by Mufti Mohammad Syed, the then Chief Minister, who also gave it a huge chunk of forest land, free of cost.

In 1986, the Prime Minister announced an aid package of approximately ₹ 180 crores for the state. Out of this, Jammu got ₹ 15.5 crores, and Kashmir, ₹ 70.06 crores. The remaining amount of ₹ 92.76 crores was meant to be spent on the common development projects of the entire state, but actually it turned out that more than ₹ 50 crores was allocated to Kashmir.

To add to all these economic advantages enjoyed by the Valley Muslims, Kashmiri Pandits exodus from the valley in 1990 has further improved their economic status. Huge chunks of agricultural and non-agricultural land left behind by Pandits (some estimates put it at 14,000 hectares of agricultural land alone) has been illegally appropriated by them. Besides, continued life in exile compelled a large number of Pandits to resort to distress sale of their properties. "99 per cent of the sale of houses by Pandits was termed as distress sale."[14] Such distress sale, particularly in the initial years of militancy,

further contributed to enriching the Kashmiri Muslims. A clear indication of improved economic status of Kashmiri Muslims is the fact that in every home, whenever there is some function, jewellery is presented as gifts to the guests. "Now, even diamonds are becoming popular. It was not so earlier," says Nisar Ahmed, a shop-owner.

Additionally, what contributed substantially to the economic betterment of Kashmiri Muslims was that they got to fill-in thousands of government posts which were created as a result of Pandit's exodus from Kashmir. Besides, the posts vacated by Pandits in the State government services while retiring every month, too got filled by Kashmiri Muslims as none was recruited from amongst the former. By 2007, approximately 72 per cent of state government Pandit employees had retired and these posts were filled up by Kashmiri Muslims. After more than two decades of their exodus, the State government, on instructions from the centre, has recently recruited 3,000 Pandits, though their service conditions stipulate that they need to serve in Kashmir. How many will take up these jobs is, therefore, a moot point.

It is because of all these reasons that one does not get to see the same stark poverty in Kashmir Valley, as one gets to see in the rural areas of rest of India.

Compare this with PoK, if only to bring out the fact that Kashmiris are better off than those living across the LoC. World Bank report of July 2002, stated that 88 per cent people in PoK live in rural areas, depending on forestry and agriculture. Unemployment ranges between 35 to 50 per cent. Literacy, till recently, was only 10 per cent, though it has now risen to 48 per cent. Sixty per cent of the population has no access to drinking water. Whereas, per capita income of Pakistan was 420 $ (₹ 21000) in 2006, in PoK it was 185–200 $ (₹ 9,500).

Present Economic Realities of the State

Government of India has poured in thousands of crores of rupees into the State in the past two decades of insurgency, to help some specific sectors, like tourism, which were hard hit by insurgency. Before militancy set in, tourism contributed ₹ 500 crores per annum to the State's economy. The tourist inflow, which had reached a peak of 730,000 in 1978–79, was reduced to a few thousand after violence broke out in Kashmir. Public infrastructure also suffered great damage due to neglect and violence. Between 1989 and 1996, about 725 educational institutions and 303 bridges and culverts had been destroyed. The negligible recovery of taxes and revenues during the nineties further increased the non-plan deficit. Consequently, the State's economic dependence on the centre further increased in the recent past.

Reserve Bank of India's figures (2009–2010) clearly point out the deep financial mess the State is in. In 2009–2010, it received 60 per cent of its total expenditure, amounting to ₹ 13,252 corers, as grants. Between 1989–90 and 2009–2010 (militancy period), the state received a total of ₹ 94,409 crores, as grants. During the decade between 1994–95 and 2005–2006, the state got 10–12 per cent of the total amount disbursed as grants to all the states of the country. Though, in 2009–2010, it had marginally dipped to eight per cent. Such high level of grants, compared to its ratio of the entire population of the country (nearly one per cent) proves that the Central government has been more than kind to the State. The inflow of goods into the Valley also increased from ₹ 1,157.33 crores in 1989–90 to ₹ 2,536.53 crores in 1994–1995 (the worst period of militancy). During the same period, the outflow of goods from the Valley also increased by nearly 50 per cent.

Compare this with the centre's attitude towards the perennially insurgency-hit north-east. The combined grant received by the eight north-eastern states during the same period was ₹ 29,084 cores; 44 per cent of their entire expenditure. This is significantly lower than that of Jammu and Kashmir.

Mis-utilisation of these funds by Jammu and Kashmir has often raised many eye brows. Only 30 per cent of the aggregate expenditure of the State is incurred on social sectors, i.e. schools, health and rural development — fourth lowest among all states. This is against the national average of the 40 per cent.

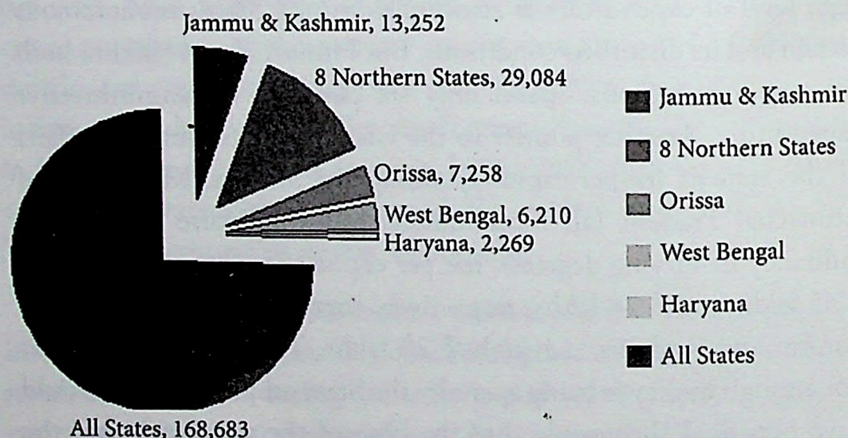
Despite militancy being at peak during 1990–1995, 6,428 villages were brought under new water supply scheme, besides executing two master plans for Jammu and Srinagar, respectively. Similarly, handicraft production in Kashmir Valley, which in 1974–75 was ₹ 200 million, rose to ₹ 2,400 million in 1993–94. Export of handicrafts also registered a jump from ₹ 75 million to ₹ 2,130 million during the same period. In 1993–94 alone, 3,617 health centres were set up. The enrollment of primary school students also went up from 745,000 in 1989–90 to 940,000 in 1994–95. The State employs 350,000 people, whereas Rajasthan, which is five times the size of Jammu and Kashmir employs only 600,000 people. For the Tenth Five-Year Plan, it got a per capita allocation of ₹ 14,399, compared to ₹ 2,536 for Bihar and ₹ 5,177 for Orrisa.

Administrative expenditure of Jammu and Kashmir is nearly 12 per cent of its overall expenditure. Some might argue that such high level of expenditure is attributable to the State's mountainous terrain and its disturbed conditions. But Himachal and Sikkim, both mountainous regions, spend only six per cent on administrative expenditure. Another pointer to the woeful state of financial affairs of the state is its per-capita spending. In Sikkim, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh (all mountainous states and also affected by militancy in varying degrees), the per capita spending is ₹ 59 lakhs, ₹ 35 lakhs and ₹ 38 lakhs, respectively (figures for 2009–2010). In Jammu and Kashmir, it is only ₹ 20 lakhs. This clearly shows that not enough money is being spent by the State on projects that would have benefited the people directly. One of the reasons is that the State is not generating enough revenue of its own. Besides, there are

legitimate doubts whether even the money being shown as spent, was in fact spent at all. Incidentally, not long ago the State was rated as the second most corrupt state among all Indian States by the Berlin-based International Corruption Watchdog, 'The Transparency International.' As Mohan Guruswamy and Jeevan Prakash Mohanty have stated, "Talk to even the most ardent pro-India Kashmiri, and he will tell you that politicians and bureaucrats have stolen most of the money. Lending credence to this is the amazing explosion of new construction in evidence all over Kashmir Valley. It is believed that every second house belongs to a government employee or one connected with it. Relate this to the low poverty level in the State and it would seem that trickle-down economics works."[15]

That the so-called economic backwardness was the cause of breaking out of insurgency in Kashmir has been refuted by no less than its youthful Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah. Speaking on the occasion of inauguration of Qazigund-Anantnag railway line on October 28, 2009, he said, "Kashmir issue cannot be resolved through the flow of money. It was the politics, not the urge for

Grants from Central Govt. (₹ Cr.): Share of Total State Expenditure (%)



Source: *Times of India*, July 19, 2010

money that drove the Kashmiri youth to take up arms twenty years back."

Another Myth: Identity Crisis

Raising the bogey of Kashmiri identity being under threat by 'Hindu' India' by Kashmiri separatists, local politicians and their supporters outside the State has been a common feature of Kashmiri politics. For separatists, it becomes an emotion-laden slogan to galvanise its cadres against India, projected as a coloniser, out to overwhelm and destroy Kashmir's predominant Islamic culture. For mainstream politicians of the Valley, it helps to pit their support base in the Valley against Jammu. This helps them polarise voters regionally, and reap rich electoral dividends; the Valley has larger number of assembly seats than Jammu region. For their supporters outside the State, it is another stick to beat the 'communal forces' with.

The facts are to the contrary. Hindus of Kashmir, who formed about nine per cent of its population in 1947, have almost entirely been cleansed out of Kashmir valley. With Article 370 in place; no outsider can settle in the State or own businesses there and thereby endanger Kashmir's Muslim identity. If at all, its Muslim identity has been strengthened after 1947. In this respect, Kashmir can favourably be compared to Pakistan and Bangladesh, where minority Hindus have met with the same fate. The only difference being that both these countries are declared Islamic republics, whereas India is a secular nation. Is not Kashmiri identity threatened by the fact that Kashmir is the only place where people prefer Urdu or English, as the medium of instruction for their children, instead of their mother tongue, Kashmiri? Ironically, those who are beating their breasts about the loss of Kashmiri identity have actually been responsible for the decline in the fortunes of Kashmiri language. This decline, which began after the annexation of Kashmir by Mughals in sixteenth century, was dealt

a deathly blow when Urdu was declared the State's official language in 1947. The language also suffered due to the disagreement over the suitable script for writing Kashmiri. Kashmiri Pandits have been in favour of Sharda script for writing Kashmiri, whereas Muslims have preferred Persian. Historically and scientifically speaking, Kashmiri Pandits have a stronger argument. Dr KN Pandita writes, "Kalhana's *Rajtarangini*, which Stein made the archetype for his translation into English, was also written in the Sharda script."[16] Needless to say, Sharda script was a scientific and time tested script. Dr Pandita further says, "Its replacement by Arabic script, to which some diacritical marks have been appended, remains the most unscientific and unjustifiable script for Kashmiri language."[17] The fact is that rather than examining the issue purely as a scientific exercise, Kashmiri Muslims have turned it into a political issue. The contention of later-day Hindu writers and poets to use diacritically modified Devnagri script for Kashmiri language has some scientific justification.

The present crises in the valley have nothing to do with economy or identity. The outbreak of insurgency in Kashmir is an Islamist upsurge against India, whose secularism is alien to the very core of radical Islamic religious concept. Such view has been repeatedly confirmed by Kashmir's most prominent separatist leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani. While addressing a huge congregation of people in Srinagar during the 'Amarnath land row agitation' in July 2008, Geelani said, "We have one point programme; *Azadi, bara-e-Islam* (Freedom for Islam) and not for secularism or anything else."[18] As a result, the grand strategy of the radical Islamic elements and their armed cadres in Kashmir has been to annihilate the Kashmiri Hindus in order to present an Islamised Kashmir as a fait accompli. This was the actual cause why Pandits were killed and forced to flee.

Turning Jagmohan in to Fall-guy

One of the important features of the disinformation campaign

launched by the radical Islamists was to nurture and cultivate support for their perceived grievances against India. Venomous propaganda of their grievances relating to political, religious, economic and other aspects, over decades, had enabled the Islamists to prepare the ground for effectively spreading lies against India and Pandits, which people readily believed. Jagmohan, was the Governor of the State during the most crucial period when insurgency broke out and rapidly spread throughout the Valley (January to May 1990). It was during his governorship that Pandit exodus began. His firm handling of the sudden upsurge in violence had turned him into a target of the radical elements as they found in him a determined administrator who could pose a serious challenge to their nefarious designs. Vicious and insidious campaign of calumny, lies and his so-called communal bias was launched against him. Turning him into a fall guy became the most important political objective of the separatists. Benazir Bhutto, Pakistan's Prime Minister at that time, lent her own voice to this tirade against Jagmohan, demanding his removal, repeatedly and publically. During his brief spell as Governor of the State, Jagmohan tried his best to stem the rot against heavy odds, but VP Singh's Government at the Centre extended no support to Jagmohan in this grim fight against the militants. In fact, in order to appease the separatists and their mentors across the LoC, he was immediately replaced.

With the government machinery, the media, the left-liberal class and the 'human rights' activists baying for Jagmohan's blood, the militants, their OGWs, collaborators and sympathisers decided to put the blame for the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits on him. They and their above-mentioned collaborators outside Kashmir, worked overtime to spread the myth that it was Jagmohan who had advised/ordered the Kashmiri Hindus to leave the valley, so that he could then unleash the security forces on the hapless population without any worry of collateral damage! As if India was a banana republic or we were living in a mediaeval period. The political parties, with

their vote banks in their mind, and the pliant media went out of its way to support the separatist propaganda. The media, with very few exceptions, chose to hide the tragic story of Pandit exodus. No matter what Jagmohan said, his word never reached the people. The gullible public believed what was fed to them by the biased media and the wily politicians.

Kashmiri Pandits have had a long history of their habitation in Kashmir, dating back to pre-historic era. Their cultural traditions and rituals were fashioned by their deep attachment to their land. From birth to death, through many festivals held at Kashmir's numerous religious shrines, endowments and ancient temples, their entire life was bound with their land. Many of their pilgrimage centres and temples trace back their origin to the *Neelmat* era and beyond. Some of these centres have witnessed unbroken pilgrimages being undertaken from times immemorial to the present day. This religious tradition kept the Pandits intertwined with the Valley's land. Generation after generation, Kashmiri Pandits lived and died in the Valley despite the Muslim onslaught after the arrival of Islam in Kashmir. It is, therefore, naive to think that Kashmiri Pandits should have snapped their moorings and abandoned their homes of thousands of years, at Jagmohan's bidding. It is inconceivable that a literate community like Kashmiri Pandits would jump into the unknown and throw itself at the mercy and charity of strangers, because Jagmohan asked them to do so. It is preposterous to think that a well-established community will leave behind all assets amounting to thousands of crores of rupees and put their own future and that of their coming generations at risk in an alien environment, because Governor Jagmohan asked them to do so. According to the Islamists, this perilous course was adopted by the Pandits to enable Jagmohan to do with the Valley and its people, as he pleased, like a modern-day Sikander Butshikan.

No one ever asked the Islamists and their camp followers one simple question; "In the utter chaos into which the Valley was thrown

due to the sudden outbreak of militant violence in 1989-90, how was Jagmohan able to send this message of evacuation to every nook and corner of Kashmir, into which Kashmiri Pandits were scattered." And the miracle is that all this happened while Jagmohan was flying into the Valley, a day after being sworn-in at Jammu, while the caravan of Kashmiri Pandit exodus was winding its painful way up the slopes of Pir Panjal, in precisely the opposite direction.

It was not only their physical elimination that scared the day lights out of Kashmir Pandits, but the indignities heaped on their womenfolk and the highly credible threats conveyed by the Islamists, which forced the Pandits to leave.

A survey carried out while compiling the *White Paper on Kashmir*, to ascertain the reasons for the exodus, revealed the truth. This is appended below:

Percentage of Pandits who fled from			Expressed following as the cause of their fleeing from Kashmir
Towns	Village	Remote Areas	
56	38	12	They were marked to be killed and had just about a day and a half to make good their escape.
38	13	12	They had credible information that their names appeared in the "hit list" prepared by the militants.
43	28	22	They heard rumours that their name figured in the "Hit List"
68	42	8	They received threats from various militant organisations.
6	2		They received instructions to appear before Muslim tribunals established in local mosques, after Friday prayers, who would then decide their fate. Less than one per cent stated that they actually appeared before any such tribunal. Others fled before the appointed day of their appearance before these tribunals.

38	46	71	Threats were communicated through Muslim neighbours and acquaintances.
42	69	68	They received confidential information that they were being accused of espionage for India. They further said that they believed that such accusations meant sure execution at the hands of militants.
32	41	76	They were confidentially counselled by their Muslim neighbours to shift to Jammu as their continued stay in Kashmir involved great risk to their lives.
82	-	57	They received threats through public address system of mosques, which involved long discourses on the sacred mission of the Islamists to rid the Valley of *Kafirs* (As Pandits were referred to).
62	21	8	They read notices in locally published Urdu newspapers warning Hindus to leave Kashmir within 24 hours or face death.
67	47	-	They were forced out of their homes to join the rampaging mobs that held the Pandits to ransom on the night of January 19, 1990.
87	67	68	They did not dare lodge a complaint with the local police station for the following reasons:- (a) Feared retaliation by militants. (b) Apprehensive about police revealing their identity to the militants. (c) Militants kept strict watch on police stations.
79	38	-	They felt insecure as police posts in their localities did not function.
78	83	-	They apprehended attack on their womenfolk. 86 per cent decided to leave after the traumatic events of the night of January 19.

93	-	63	Describing their experience of the night of January 19, they said they did not join the night long protest. 81 per cent respondents said that they hid their women and children lest they were harmed. 12 per cent said that unruly mobs had entered their houses and their behaviour inside the houses was dangerous. 81 per cent of the respondents stated that during this night and many other nights that followed, they hid their women folk and children from strangers who broke into their houses.
43	-	14	They had evacuated under the protection provided by the central security forces. They expressed the view that they would certainly have been eliminated if these forces had not helped them to evacuate.
46	61	83	They would have run the risk of being converted to Islam had they not fled from the Valley.

When specifically asked to spell out their apprehensions, 85 per cent of the respondents said that they would have fallen victim to large-scale assassinations had they not fled from the valley. 92.5 per cent said that their womenfolk would have been assaulted had they not fled.

The following is the opinion expressed exclusively by women interviewees:

Percentage of women who fled from			Expressed following as the cause of their fleeing from Kashmir
Towns	Village	Remote locations	
52	86	-	They were marked to be killed and had just about a day and a half to make good their escape.
68	74	-	Apprehended attack on their houses.
63	-	-	They had evacuated due to large-scale assassinations of Hindus.
88	96	-	Feared assault on their families.
76	72	-	Expected mass conversion of Hindus to Islam.

88	-	-	Expected no guarantee of their life in the localities in which they lived and decided that their evacuation was necessary.
97	-	-	They would have been liquidated in large numbers had they not evacuated in time.
6	-	8	Were advised by the central security forces to evacuate to safer places.

Source: *White Paper on Kashmir*: Dr MK Teng and CL Guddu for Joint Human Rights Committee.

It may be noted that none of the respondents stated having received any overt or covert instruction from the State/Central Government or from the Governor or from his office to the effect that even remotely suggested that they should leave the Valley. While speaking at a seminar in New Delhi on December 26, 2010, Jagmohan described it as "one of history's greatest lies."[19]

When specifically asked to comment on the widely circulated canard in the valley that it was Jagmohan who encouraged Pandits to leave the valley, Sofi replied, "It is a total lie. It is part of systematic propaganda. The Pandits flight from the Valley was the sequel to a plan hatched well in advance from outside the state. It had nothing to do with Jagmohan... Nearly 32,000 Kashmiri Pandit houses have been burnt in since 1991. Is Jagmohan's hand in this too?"

Ashish Nandy of the Centre for Developing Studies said appropriately, "When Hindus began to be exterminated systematically in Kashmir and to leave in large numbers; our secular friends said then that Governor Jagmohan had deliberately organised the forced exodus. I would like to see people leaving their ancestral homes with a sack in hand just because the governor of the state asks them to do so! When questioned later as to how the killing of Hindus were

not condemned strongly enough, some of them said newspapers had refused to carry their statements."[20]

Speaking at an international Conference in Kolkatta, on January 25, 2005, eminent French journalist and human rights activist Francois Gautier said, "The Kashmiri Pandits are victims of unparalleled ethnic cleansing. I have covered Kashmir since 1990s and saw how the Kashmiri Pandits had to flee because of terror, and live in camps in a sorry state. It is a very sad story."

The secular façade which Kashmir has worn after Independence was provided mainly by Kashmiri Pandits. They never reacted to Muslim communalism; instead, they faced it with the fervent hope that universalisation of education and gradual development of scientific temper by the majority community in Kashmir, would lead to religious tolerance, equity, justice and the recognition of the genuine aspirations of Kashmir's minority Pandits. However, this hope was shattered, as neither the Muslims in Kashmir nor the Indian Government, which swears by secularism, came to their rescue in their hour of need. All the constitutional guarantees for the protection of their life, dignity and property were trampled with impunity. Indian political parties, its official organs, media in general and the secularists, remained mute spectators to the communal killings of Pandits, other non-Muslims and pro-India Muslims and their forced exile from their homes and hearths.

Notes

1. House boats are synonymous with tourist industry in Kashmir. Tourists live in these magnificent boats, anchored in the serene and placid waters of Dal and Nagin lakes of Kashmir. Incidentally, it was a Kashmiri Pandit, Narain Das, who constructed the first house boat in Kashmir. "Narain Das was one of the first five Kashmiris to learn English from Rev. Doxy, the founder of famous Kashmir Mission School in 1982," says the book *Keys to Kashmir*. He was the father of the renowned Shaivite philosopher of recent times, Swami Laxman Joo. Narain Das had opened a small store to cater to the needs of European visitors, who had started flocking to Kashmir in large numbers at the turn of nineteenth century.

Once his store was destroyed in fire, and not finding a suitable place to run the strore from, he shifted to a doonga. This shifting turned out to be a blessing in disguise as the doonga could be moved to a convenient location for visitors and moored there. When rain and snow destroyed the matting walls and hay roof of his new store, he replaced these with wooden planks and shingles. A British officer once took fancy to his doonga and purchased it from Narain Das, who found the deal quite profitable. Thereafter, Narain Das started constructing doonga and gave up the business of running stores.

Narain Das had also developed trade relations with some companies belonging to Western countries. One of these was Koch Burns Agency, which too ran a departmental store from a doonga, parked on the Jhelum, near Shivpora in Srinagar. "In 1885, the Koch Burns Agency shifted to Chinar Bagh near Dalgate. Once a customer of the Agency, Dr Knight, suggested to Narain Das that he should make some modifications to the doonga to make it more attractive and convenient for the tourists to live in," says Inder Krishen Raina, a grand nephew of Narain Das. The latter found the idea interesting and carried out the required modifications. By July 4, 1890, after much trial and error, the first house boat was ready for commercial use of tourists. However, constant improvement in design and aesthetics continued till many years thereafter. With vital inputs from Colonel R Sartorius, V.C., and some other Englishmen, the first double storey house boat, named 'Victory', was constructed in 1918. This had led to Narain Das being known by the nick name Nav Narain (Nav, meaning boat).

The boats are made of quality cedar wood available in deep forests of northwest Kashmir.

2. Dr MK Teng and CL Gadoo, *White Paper on Kashmir* for Joint Human Rights Committee for Minorities in Kashmir (Gupta Print Services).
3. Binish Gulzar and Syed Rakshanda Suman; *Pioneer*, August 25, 2009.
4. Shankar Aiyer, *India Today*, October 14, 2002, p. 36.
5. Mohan Guruswamy and Jeevan Prakash Mohanty, *Jammu and Kashmir: Is there really a fresh vision and a new blueprint?* Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPAS), New Delhi.
6. Shankar Aiyer, n. 4.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Mohan Guruswamy and Jeevan Prakash Mohanty, n. 5.
10. Ibid.
11. Joginder Singh, *Pioneer*, February 11, 2008.
12. Inside Kashmir-3, *Times of India*, August 2, 2010.
13. *Times of India*, January 22, 2011.
14. Prof Hari Om, *Kashmir Sentinel*, December, 2006.
15. Mohan Guruswamy and Jeevan Prakash Mohanty, n. 5.
16. Dr KN Pandita, *Koshur Samachar*, July 2011, p. 32.
17. Ibid.
18. Subodh Gildayal, *Times of India*, August 20, 2008.
19. From interview by Omkar Razdan, *Time of India*, November 9, 1997.
20. A Dangerous Symbiosis, *Outlook*, April 1, 2002

17

AFTERMATH OF EXODUS

Green fields are gone now, parched by the sun.
Gone from the valleys, where rivers used to run.
Gone with the cold wind that swept into my heart.
Gone with the lovers, who left their dreams depart.

—*Greenfields lyrics (The Brothers Four)*



Ganpathyar locality of Srinagar, predominantly inhabited by Kashmiri Pandits, looking completely deserted, even a decade after the exodus (April 2000)

Jammu: Pandit Refugees' First Halt

At the government level, there existed no procedures or mechanisms that would immediately be put into practice to provide succor to the thousands of hapless refugees. On reaching Jammu, many people took shelter in temples, schools, *serais* (inns), community/religious places, government buildings, open patches, street corners, etc., mostly under open skies. The government did not rise to the occasion and failed to provide shelter to the traumatised community, most of whom had landed with practically nothing, besides the clothes they were wearing. It was left to the members of the voluntary Hindu organisations to provide the refugees with the bare essential requirements. Gita Bhavan, forming part of the Shiva temple complex in the heart of Jammu city, became the focal point of the Pandit refugees on arrival. Most of the refugees disembarked here after they fled from Srinagar. They arrived in a disheveled state, hungry and thirsty, but safe anyhow. Several prominent Hindu leaders of the state formed a *Sahayta Committee* (Assistance Committee), under Amarnath Vaishnavi, a prominent Kashmiri Pandit social activist.

Jammu city witnessed utter chaos as it lacked adequate infrastructure to handle such a huge influx of new settlers. Initially, the government turned a blind eye to the problem, but the ever-increasing number of refugees pouring in from the valley, compelled the government to establish tented camps to house them. In due course of time, nearly 215,000 Pandit refugees were accommodated in 36 camps established at different locations in Jammu province, including those at Nagrota, Reasi, Udhampur and Kathua. These camps did not have even the rudimentary civic facilities, like sanitation and water supply. Medical facilities were non-existent. For example, for a township of 500 tents in Nagrota, located six kms from Jammu, there were only three taps for the entire population, with water supply restricted to half hour each in the morning and evening. Similarly, the camp had only three

toilets and no schools, compelling children to while away their time in idle gossip and aimless pursuits. Due to the appalling conditions prevailing in the camps, 60 per cent of the refugees shifted to one-room rented accommodation shortly after arriving in these camps. This, despite the fact, that heavy inflow of refugees into Jammu had pushed up the rents exorbitantly. Approximately 15 per cent of the refugees were also accommodated by their relatives.

Arrival of such a huge number of refugees in Jammu suddenly put additional burden on the limited resources of the city. This led to the increased cost of essential commodities of daily-use and higher rentals for scarce accommodation, which Pandits sought. Rise in the cost of living across the board, created difficulties for the locals who found themselves dealing with thousands of uninvited people. Kashmiri Pandits became a focus as well as a cause of the resentment felt by the people of Jammu. Virender Kumar's dispatch in the *Indian Express* of July 10, 1990, states, "In Jammu, the influx of more than one lakh refugees… has given rise to apprehensions that they would soon be competing with the local people for the limited jobs and avenues of higher education. The government's action in giving regular postings to some refugees in Jammu has made these apprehensions look real."

In order to avoid an adverse political fall-out in Jammu, the State Government appointed the Relief Commissioner as the officer responsible to supervise the provision of relief to the refugees. Many sub-offices were also created at various places in Jammu, under the charge of assistant commissioners. Each refugee family's arrival was recorded in a 'Ration Book' as 'Refugee Family', after the head of the family furnished all details about the family members, including names, addresses, etc. This book was certified by the relief commissioner. The rations drawn by each family, along with financial assistance received, was duly entered into this book. The distribution of ration was carried out through government-run ration shops

and financial relief was disbursed through a number of counters established at various places in the city.

Since most refugees had lost all means of their livelihood, they were provided with a monthly financial assistance of ₹ 1000 for a family of five members, besides nine kilograms of rice and two kilograms of





A view of a typical Refugee Camp at Jammu

wheat flour per head per month by the government. Paying such a paltry sum as relief fell far short of what was paid to people in similar situations even in war-torn Ethiopia and Somalia. India, that prided itself in providing shelter to the persecuted people like the Zoroastrians, the Tibetans and refugees from erstwhile Soviet Union, East Pakistan and Afghanistan, could have certainly shown more compassion while dealing with their own persecuted people. This 'relief' was not applicable to the employees of the state government who were permitted to draw their regular salaries from offices in Jammu.

Delhi became the other major destination for the refugees, where a number of refugee camps were hurriedly organised by some voluntary Hindu organisations. 'Kashmiri Samiti', Delhi, under its President Chaman Lal Gadoo, worked tirelessly to provide relief with their limited resources. Fifteen years after their displacement, 14 per cent of Kashmiri Pandit refugees were still occupying 16 camps and 70 non-camp habitations, with nearly 60 per cent of these being from rural areas; 60 per cent from Anantnag and 28 per cent from old Baramulla districts, with the remaining from urban areas, mostly from Srinagar district.

An unstarred question in Rajya Sabha on August 7, 2002, received the following reply:

"As per information available, 56,246 families have migrated from the Valley. Of these 34,305 are staying in Jammu, 19,338 families are in Delhi and 2,603 families in other states. 238 Kashmiri refugee families are living in 14 camps in Delhi and 4778 families in 12 camps in Jammu..."

Nearly the same figures were quoted by Sh Jitender Singh, the Minister of State for Home Affairs in the Union Government. Speaking in the Rajya Sabha on August 22, 2012, he said that close to 60,000 families of Kashmiri Pandits had moved out of the Valley. (*Times of India*, Delhi Edition, August 23, 2012).

Post Exodus: Immediate Fallout

The Indian people are by and large, emotionally attached to their birth places. This is visible during involuntary displacement when villages and towns have to be permanently evacuated to facilitate the execution of development projects. When the Tehri dam was to be built, one of the reasons given by the local residents for being reluctant to shift out from there to new rehabilitation sites was that they were deeply attached to their birth place. Displacement, resulting due to conflicts and political turmoil, leads to impoverishment and deterioration in the living standards of the displaced. This is evident in the following:-

1. Landlessness.
2. Homelessness.
3. Unemployment.
4. Marginalisation on all accounts.
5. Food insecurity.
6. Morbidity and mortality.
7. Social dis-articulation.

Being, by and large, composed of and dominated by elements that had long ceased to be neutral and secular, Kashmiri Pandits suffered due to the attitude of this biased bureaucracy, whose prejudice against the former was well-established. Traditionally, the state bureaucracy was divided into two factions; those belonging to the State and those, mostly Muslims, who belonged to the Indian Administrative Service. The former had risen to high positions from ordinary appointments, due to being 'conferred' with the IAS designation, without having had to pass the actual examination. This segment formed a very powerful block of the State Administration. The other faction was rootless in the state, but survived by ingratiating itself with the political bosses

at the centre and at the state level. Nevertheless, having realised the minimal impact that the Kashmiri Pandits exodus was likely to have on the State or on the national politics, this segment of bureaucracy chose to remain indifferent to their plight.

Kashmiri Pandits soon realised that they had landed from frying pan into the fire. Their travails started right from the process of disbursement of relief itself, which soon got entangled in the web of bureaucratic corruption. It did not take much time for the biased bureaucracy to frame rules that made it difficult for the refugees to prove their displaced status. The concerned Relief Department often changed the terms and conditions of eligibility for the Pandits to receive relief. Driven from pillar to post, the refugees greased the palms of Babus (an unflattering term used to describe a government servant, who constitutes the heart and soul of bureaucratic red tape), in order to receive the paltry sum. A survey conducted to assess the impact of this undesirable situation established that 62 per cent had paid regular bribes to ensure disbursement of relief to them. About 26 per cent of those queried refused to answer the question out of fear of incurring the wrath of the concerned officials. A news item published in a leading national daily, the *Indian Express* sometime during this period states:

"The trauma of terrorism that compelled Hindus in Kashmir to flee to safety has followed them into their forbidding refugee camps around Jammu." Quoting Mumbai-based film maker, Ashok Pandit, who spoke to the Express News Service after visiting all the 36 camps around Jammu, housing 215,000 refugees, it says, "After suffering persecution by separatists, the distraught runaways felt they were being victimised by the administration, who did not care about their plight." Writing about the state of civic amenities existing in the camps, the newspaper further writes, "The water supply and sanitation in almost all these tent settlements, were inadequate, if not non-existent. Medical facilities were pathetic."

The paper further writes, "For food, the residents of the camp at Nagrota were expected to travel to Jammu by a Matador (a small vehicle that can carry about 10–12 passengers) and were apportioned not more than one kilogram sugar and nine kilogram rice per family per month on their ration cards. The rice was weighed with a generous mixture of gravel, the refugees alleged."

Describing the plight of the refugees in the camps, the newspaper adds, "While two young girls died of snakebite, a young woman and a two-year-old child succumbed to exposure on account of the oppressive heat. There were some 3,000 government quarters lying vacant in Jammu, but for some reason are not being used for accommodating the streams of refugees. The refugees complained that instead of attending to these issues, the government was giving compensation as relief to the business houses and *Shikarawalas* (boatmen)." Both of these categories were owned by Kashmiri Muslims.

Ironically, compared to what the Pandits had to undergo, the Muslim refugees (those who had shifted out of the Valley to avoid becoming unintended victims of the violence in Kashmir) were not put up in tented camps, but were lodged in separate government quarters. They were not required to fill-up any forms, nor were they rquired to prove their displaced status. They were not even required to collect their cash relief from the counters established for the refugees, but the same was disbursed to them separately.

The government employees among the refugees, and those serving with other corporate houses, had been permitted to draw their salaries in exile, as long as they could not join their duties in the Valley due to the ongoing militancy. An order issued by the Governor in 1990, had categorised them as 'refugee employees'. However, in its implementation, the order was curiously twisted and distorted to harass them. The Head of the Finance Department, a Muslim IAS officer, devised a term 'Leave Salary' and instructed that the refugee

employees will be paid their salaries under this proviso. It was an ingenious means of further harassing approximately 12,000 refugee employees who formed less than five per cent of the total employees in the State Service.

The leave salary rule had a devastating effect on a large number of employees who were working on temporary/ad hoc/non-permanent/work-charge basis. Their services were abruptly terminated as they could not claim 'leave salary.'[1] Many of the discharged employees had worked for years on their respective posts, and for them, the chances of finding a fresh job at this stage in life were negligible. Hundreds of employees had no chance of having their jobs confirmed in due course, as per the existing government orders. They were suddenly faced with bleak future, with no way of earning their livelihood. The 'leave salary' rule had other ramifications; the employees could only be paid their substantive pay; the disbursement of other admissible allowances was withheld. They could not claim periodic increments, promotions, grade increments and pensionary benefits. After protests and demonstrations by the employees, some allowances were restored, but the admissibility of the fresh ones was left to be decided by the State Government. Subsequently, however, the government issued supplementary orders to various departments to allow the refugee employees to draw periodic increments. As far as other benefits were concerned, despite demonstrations and other forms of non-violent protests, no other benefit was granted. To add insult to injury, promotions of some Pandit employees were ordered, but they were posted to the remotest corners of the Valley, from where they had fled due to intense militant activity. The orders particularly specified that promotions would take effect only on the concerned employee physically reporting to the place of posting. No employee, thus promoted, ever reported to the next place of posting.

Another class of Pandit refugees, who lost their livelihood, was those who had served their entire lives in private institutions and

organisations which received grants-in-aid from the government. Most of them had reached a stage in their service that would have entitled them to pensions and other benefits. These institutions included schools, colleges, hospitals, nursing homes, clinical laboratories, Hindu religious endowments and temple trusts, including the Dharmarth Trust (p. 562). These affected employees ran from pillar to post to have their salaries restored to them, but in vain. As *Kashmir Sentinel* mentions, "It took almost a hundred orders for the government to restore the basic rights of the refugee employees. For each order to materialise, the displaced Hindu employees had to wage a relentless struggle of protests, *dharnas* and rallies in scorching heat."[2] For restoration of house rent allowance/city compensatory allowance, which had been denied to them, they had to go to High Court, which upheld their plea. The State Government approached the Supreme Court to have the verdict reversed, but the latter too upheld the High Court order. However, till as late as May 2010, they had not been paid their dues.

The Indian society largely remained oblivious to the plight of the Pandit refugees as the media had clearly succeeded in hiding their tragedy from the public. While blood continued to flow in the Valley, the Kashmiri Pandits' plight in the camps and outside was soon forgotten. The tents in the camps became uninhabitable due to normal wear and tear, but were not replaced. With no regular maintenance, the makeshift sanitary arrangements and drinking water facilities soon gave way, without being replaced or repaired. No one in the Government, both in the State and at the Centre, had any time to visit the camps and get to know the plight of the refugees, first hand. In 1993, Farooq Abdullah and Ghulam Nabi Azad visited the camps, but instead of assessing their needs and issuing necessary instructions for improving the living conditions in the camps, they asked the refugees to return to the Valley. Incidentally, this was the period when the HM and LeT had come to establish

their complete sway on the militancy in Kashmir. Many foreign delegations, including those from European Union and Commonwealth, that visited the camps, were horrified to see the pitiable conditions in which the refugees were living. However, the detailed reports submitted by these delegations to the government too had little impact. The conditions in the camps continued to deteriorate. The dire straits into which this religious minority found itself after the exodus was pitiable, to say the least.

The conditions in the refugee camps deteriorated with the passage of time. No one paid heed to the plight of the refugees living in these camps. On April 17, 1992, Dr KN Pandita, a widely respected former Director of the Centre for Central Asian Studies said, "The members of National Integration Council could visit the debris of a religious shrine, but no one visited the refugee camps in Jammu where Hindu refugees are leading a life worse than animals."[3]

Initially, the refugees thought that they would be able to return to the Valley once the violence subsided there. Therefore, immediate succor was what they looked forward to. However, gradually, it became apparent to them that their return to Kashmir had become another of the many issues that comprised 'Kashmir dispute', which for six decades has defied a solution. Their long-term stay outside their familiar surroundings became a reality. Consequently, the adverse effects of permanent displacement on the entire community, particularly its identity as a distinct ethnic group, became acutely visible. Complete loss of status, property and prestige, dealt a deathly blow to the proud community. The ill-effects of the exodus have been severe and varied and must be examined in detail.

Loss of Movable and Immovable Property

(see Appendix 'J', p. 668)

The spontaneous decision to leave the Valley without any planning or preparation was forced on the Pandits by the ruthless

violence that was unleashed on them in Kashmir. This decision of theirs resulted in the huge loss of their movable and immovable properties. The movable assets included furniture, fittings, fixtures, kitchenware, equipment, clothing, bedding, vehicles, electronic equipment and other household items. The study carried out by the Centre for Minority Studies (Jammu and Kashmir) found that only 35–45 per cent families could bring with them their movable property when they abandoned their homes. This was either because these were looted or destroyed in fire or there was neither any space to carry these nor any time available to pack them for convenient carriage. Many people also thought that they would return soon and therefore, there was no need to carry these items with them. Though majority of people did not know where they were headed to, yet they did not carry with them even the bare minimum kitchen ware.

A majority (93 per cent) of refugees owned house, in which they lived and another six per cent owned these houses partially. Only one per cent lived in rented accommodation. These figures represented both rural and urban refugees. About 8–10 per cent families owned two houses. In rural areas, they additionally owned granaries, cowsheds and shops. In urban areas about five per cent of them owned shops. In fact, 25 per cent owned more than one shop/establishment. 40–45 per cent of houses/establishments abandoned by Pandits were destroyed by being set on fire by the militants or their over ground supporters. About five per cent houses were occupied unauthorised by those whose links with militants were well-known, and one per cent houses/establishments were occupied by security forces. About 1–4 per cent houses were given to tenants by their legal owners without seeking any rent. Majority of the houses were not insured. However, government did pay some compensation for burnt houses, but the amount was too meager to make any significant difference.

Later, in a rush for distress sale, properties worth crores of

rupees were sold at throw-away prices by Pandits, due to numerous compulsions imposed on them by circumstances of exile. A large number of houses of the refugees occupied by the militants and their over ground sympathisers, continued to remain under their occupation, particularly in rural areas. A law was enacted in 1997 to prevent distress sale and illegal occupation of abandoned Pandit houses. But its implementation left much to be desired. Even today, numerous houses and shops remain occupied illegally and the law has not been able to catch up with the illegal occupants. As far as the commercial establishments were concerned, these were completely lost, as these were either looted or taken over by the militants or by their proxies.

The immovable property consisting of land (irrigated and un-irrigated), orchards, vegetable gardens and non-fruit-bearing trees, was a source of income for rural communities. Almost 30 per cent refugees did not have any information about the status of their immovable assets in 2005, while 35 per cent said that the land was lying idle, with no cultivation being undertaken. Many said that their orchards and trees had been destroyed. About 4–5 per cent of the property was occupied unauthorised. The irrigated land had been put to use by neighbours without paying any rent. To quote one example; four kanals of land belonging to Pandit refugees was grabbed by the local residents of village Tulwari in Handwara tehsil. Despite repeated complaints to the concerned authorities, the land has not been restored to the owner. Similarly, land belonging to Kashmiri Pandit refugees has been acquired by the State Government in some villages, namely, Kherman, Hanood, Nandram, Khannabal, Handwara, and in some villages in Kupwara district. It has been done without obtaining the consent of or even informing the land owners about it. The aim, obviously, is to foreclose the chances of their return to the Valley. What is ironic is the fact that this has been done in contravention

of the express orders of the State Government itself (Jammu and Kashmir Refugee Immovable Property-Preservation, Protection and Restraint on Distress Sale and circular issued by State Revenue Department — No rev/Mr/56/ 2009 dated 14 July 2009). The circular clearly states that acquiring the refugee Pandits' land will be against the government's commitment to their eventual return.

Distress sale of orchards, trees and irrigated land became the order of the day in the first decade after exodus, as the refugees could not return to the Valley. A large number of refugees sold these at throw away prices.

Status of Immovable Property (Response calculated in Percentage)

Type of Property	S	O	T1	T2	U	M	N
Irrigated Land	21.70	4.40	1.12	7.58	30.12	4.40	30.68
Un-irrigated land	12.52	5.13	0.60	3.77	31.07	3.02	43.89
Orchard	26.27	6.37	2.03	3.93	25.34	1.49	34.55
Vegetable Garden	13.75	4.52	0.19	3.01	35.69	3.58	39.38
Non fruit-bearing Trees	58.60	1.36	0.10	0.78	0.68	2.33	36.15

Note: S: Distress Sale, O: Occupied Unauthorized, T1: Cultivated by Tenant on rent, T2: Cultivated by others without rent, U: Uncultivated, M: Occupied by relation/family member, N: No information.

Source: *Report on the Impact of Migration on the Socio-economic Conditions of Kashmiri Displaced People;* Jammu and Kashmir Centre for Minority Studies.

As far as the livestock was concerned, a majority of families living in rural areas raised these to augment their income. These included cows, bullocks, horses, ducks, sheep and chickens. 22 per cent had livestock worth ₹ 20,000. 42 per cent families lost their livestock valued at ₹ 10,000 each. On an average, every family lost nearly ₹ 15,000 worth of livestock. The percentage of such affected families belonging to the rural areas was 95 per cent. Consequently, these



State of a typical Kashmiri Pandit locality, four months after exodus (April 1990).

families lost one of their major sources of income due to exodus. The livestock left behind in rural areas by Hindus was simply grabbed and sold for slaughter.

Demolition and destruction of Kashmiri Pandit houses, in fact complete localities, dispossessing them of their land, orchards, business establishments, trade, shops and other properties, was aimed at destroying them economically. In the days after their exodus, the Pandit houses were ransacked and looted; even wooden doors and window frames were prised open and sold publicly. After nothing was left of the houses, except the concrete structures, these were burnt. In the first four years after exodus, 18,000 houses abandoned by the Pandits were torched. "So far militants had burnt nearly 3,441 abandoned houses belonging to Kashmiri refugees in the Valley."[4]

Those houses which were not burnt were occupied by the cadres of the militant organisations and their influential over-ground

supporters. A similar fate awaited the premises of trade, shops and business and commercial establishments, which too were taken over by the militant activists and their collaborators. Agricultural land, orchards and land attached to burnt-out houses was initially nibbled at, but subsequently appropriated completely, with the active connivance of the administration. "In two cases, government bus-stops have been set up on the land owned by Kashmiri Pandits."[5]

Status of Movable Assets

Category	Type of Property	Status of Movable Property (Percent Responses)				
		Abandoned	Brought Along	Sold	Looted	Lost in Fire
All	Furniture, fittings/fixtures	49.54	5.27	0.15	35.69	9.35
	Kitchenware, equipments	26.82	36.10	0.15	29.58	7.34
	Clothing, bedding etc.	24.26	47.71	0.15	21.00	6.88
	Vehicle	25.46	40.22	2.95	27.68	3.69
	Others	47.11	21.20	1.07	21.20	9.42

Source: *Report on the Impact of Migration on the Socio-economic Conditions of Kashmiri Displaced People;* Jammu and Kashmir Centre for Minority Studies.

Economy and Employment

Even before the exodus of Pandits in 1990, they had to suffer discrimination ever since the first Interim Government was formed after the accession of the State to India. Pandits found themselves dependent on the whims and fancies of the biased bureaucracy of the state and its Islamised administrative set-up. Though they escaped the militants' bullets, but for relief and rehabilitation, they were entirely dependent on the same administrative machinery. Their fresh travails began as soon as they landed at Jammu and met with bureaucratic apathy and on most occasions, deliberate attempts at harassment.

By the time the exodus took place in January 1990, the Pandit representation in the state government service had been reduced to a paltry figure. Taking advantage of the special powers conferred on it by Article 370, the state government had drawn up a complicated system of selection for recruitment into state government service. This was done to ensure that the recruitment remained Kashmir-centric. The system of recruitment was based on separate quotas for recruitment from Jammu and Kashmir provinces (including Ladakh).The service cadres in both provinces were further divided into Kashmir Administrative Service (KAS) and those belonging to subordinate services. State Public Service Commission carried out recruitment to the former, and the Staff Selection Committee, appointed by the state government, carried out selection to the latter. The recruitment to the subordinate services was further carried out based on quotas allocated to each district, in both provinces. Being a microscopic minority in every district of the Valley, except in Srinagar, the Kashmiri Pandits automatically stood eliminated. Even in Srinagar, they met with the same fate, though for different reasons. They had to compete with Muslims, who enjoyed reservations as 'backward classes'.

As a result of all these manipulated rules and regulations, the Pandit representation in government service never exceed four per cent, though their population remained between seven and eight per cent. The same rules were applied to exclude Hindus from the Muslim-majority districts of Poonch, Rajouri and Doda, while filling up the quotas from these districts. The same yardstick for recruitment was not applied while carrying out recruitment from the Hindu-majority districts of Udhampur, Kathua and Jammu. Here, the Muslims appropriated big quotas of employment on the pretext of belonging to 'backward classes'. The rule of provincial-quota was not applied to the recruitment to KAS and Specialised Staff Agencies. The State Public Service Commission, staffed as it was, with those who believed in Muslim precedence,

ensured almost complete exclusion of Pandits from the service. The quotas, which ensured jobs in the higher echelons and subordinate services to Muslims in Kashmir and Jammu provinces, became a rule.

After exodus, the situation for the Pandits became even more hopeless. Whatever little scope there still existed for Pandits to get employment in the state services also vanished. They were told that they had ceased to be the residents of Kashmir Province and they did not belong to Jammu either. Hence, they could not lay claim to the quota from any of the two Provinces! The ridiculous extent to which this argument was taken can be gauged from the fact that young talented cricketers were not included in various state level teams because of the same reason. Thus an undeclared moratorium was placed on the recruitment of Kashmiri Hindus in the state services. Strangely, the same rules did not apply to Kashmiri Muslims, whose applications received expeditious and special consideration. As a result, irrespective of the qualifications required to fill vacant posts after 1990, these were filled by Muslims. Rules continued to be modified in order to help Muslim recruitment into numerous government posts. This situation is starkly reflected by the figures available for 2006. Out of 400,000 state government employees, only 4,000 were Kashmiri Pandits. Rate of unemployment in Kashmir was 30 per cent (93 per cent of these were Kashmir Pandits), whereas in Jammu it was 69 per cent. Between 1990 and 2005, approximately 4,500 displaced Kashmiri Pandits retired from government service, but no recruitment was carried out from amongst them to fill the vacancies thus created. This was in sharp contrast to the recruitment of Kashmiri Muslims to fill in the vacant slots left by the fleeing Pandits.

Around 2004, the Government of India sanctioned establishment of additional 'Anganwadi' centres. This was in addition to the 10,317 such centres that already existed. Out of these centres, only four were

allotted to refugees. According to government's own yardstick, every 700 people in a given population were entitled to one such centre. Accordingly, Kashmiri Pandit share should have been much more than merely four centres. Sometime around the middle of 1990's, Education Guarantee Scheme or EGS under *Sarva Shikhsha Abhiyan*, named *Rehbar-e-Taleem*, was launched by the State Government. This scheme involved upgradation of primary schools to middle Schools and the latter into high schools. Consequently 10 EGS centres were created in each block, making it roughly 200 such centers in Kashmir alone. Teachers' posts in these schools came to be filled in against clear vacancies. Only two Kashmiri Pandit girls found a job in these centres. Similarly, they did not find any avenues in other schemes, like *Rehbar-e-Tamiraat* for engineers and *Rehbar-e-Ziraat* launched for graduates in agricultural sciences. Computerisation of state administrative machinery and the entire education infrastructure, created enormous scope for employment of computer literate youth. However, Kashmiri Pandits were left out of this entire system.

Though some refugees from rural areas found jobs in the State and Central government offices, the number was quite insignificant. The statistics are interesting and bring out the hard reality of the situation. In April 1996, this number reduced to 25,662 from 26,000 in 1989. However, as the employees kept retiring and no fresh recruitment from the refugee Pandit community took place, the number further reduced to 6,654 in 2004. During the decade between 1996 and 2006, the state government provided jobs to nearly 265,000 educated youth. And how many were Pandits? Merely 345! Even when the jobs were available, many refugees had lost precious time during exodus or had suffered such a traumatic experience that in the new environment, their awareness levels were so low that they could not compete on even terms. In 2005, unemployment among the eligible Pandit youth was as high as 72 per cent. Exodus also forced the eligible job seekers to find jobs closer to their residences,

as the changed environment dictated that the whole family stays together, for security and economic considerations.

The Pandit refugees were also denied any share in other centrally sponsored welfare schemes, like the Maternity Benefit Scheme, Old Age Pension Scheme, Integrated Scheme for Widows and Destitutes. They were also not eligible for grant of loans that were liberally doled out as part of the liberalisation of the Indian economy. The directions issued by the State Government vide its SRO-43, which spelt out its policy on providing 'healing touch' to the population in Kashmir, left out the unemployed Kashmiri Pandit youth entirely.

The exiled trading and agricultural community among the Pandits, numbering approximately 3,700, lost their goods and stocks worth ₹ 200 crores, with a recurring annual loss of nearly ₹ 25 crores. It may be mentioned that 50 per cent of the displaced people from villages owned orchards and agricultural land measuring between a few kanals to 82 kanals. All these people were entirely dependent on agricultural income from cash crops, paddy, apple, walnuts, almonds, etc. They became paupers overnight, as they were left with practically no source of income. Having been robbed of their livelihood, they were among the worst hit. Others, particularly those owning businesses, were also hit hard as they could not recover their dues before leaving the Valley, nor restart their businesses for want of capital. Many others had to leave behind their money in banks, as these did not function, because the administration had come to a halt. In 1995, an amount of ₹ one crore was sanctioned by the state government to displaced traders to start their businesses. However, even this assistance was withdrawn, later.

One of the serious consequences of the exodus was that the traditional occupations of earning livelihood had to be abandoned by the refugees as these dried up in the given circumstances. While in Kashmir, 39 per cent of the Pandit households depended on

government jobs, 30 per cent on agriculture, 20 per cent on self-employment, 10 per cent on jobs in private sector and one per cent on other jobs. The exodus changed all that. The agricultural sector vanished completely, being replaced by joblessness or by those receiving relief from the government. This segment now swelled to a whopping 26 per cent household, mainly from rural background, dependent on this relief for their survival (figures for 2002). Similarly, the number of households dependent on trade and minor businesses also came down drastically. This added a serious dimension to the problem. On the one hand, such people had to survive on meager amount provided as relief and on the other, they wasted their precious time in the absence of any gainful employment. This has adversely affected their physical and mental well-being as the effective participation rate for population above 18 years has also reduced. This rate has come down from 62 per cent in the pre-exodus period to 46 per cent in post-exodus period. For refugees from rural background, the decline was very sharp, i.e., from 82 per cent to 37 per cent. This drastic shift in effective participation affected the Pandit women in a big way, as their occupation in agricultural activities came to an abrupt end, without it being replaced by anything worthwhile. Gradually, some of these ladies were lucky enough to find jobs in private sector in order to augment the meager house-hold incomes.

The employed and the unemployed among the Kashmiri Pandit refugees were treated unfairly and discriminated against by the State's powerful bureaucracy. It is ironic that government continued to shower economic largesse on the slain militants' families by dishing out cash doles amounting to lakhs of rupees, but turned a blind eye to the rehabilitation of the victims of militancy. Joginder Singh, the former Director General of India's premier investigative agency, the Central Bureau of Intelligence says, "Parents and families of terrorists killed in open encounters

are given an ex-gratia of ₹ 10 lakhs meant for their rehabilitation, while assistance hardly reaches their victims. More is being done for terrorists than for the four lakh Kashmiri Pandits and Sikhs who were forced to leave the Valley as part of ethnic cleansing launched by terrorists and separatists."[6]

Damage to Religious Places (see Appendix 'I'; p. 662)

> *"Sheikh ne masjid banayi, mismar butkhana kiya:*
> *Pehle kuchh soorat to thee, ab khaas veerana kiya."*
>
> —*Daya Shankar Nasim*

(The Sheikh made a mosque after demolishing a temple; earlier there was an image to concentrate upon, now there is a ruin to wander on.)

Vandalising and destroying of Kashmiri Pandit religious places came naturally to the radical Islamists whose ancestors had done the same ever since their arrival, first in India and later in Kashmir. Nirad Chaudhary puts it in perspective when he says, "From 1000 AD, every temple from Kathiawar to Bihar, from Himalayas to Vindyas has been sacked and ruined. Not one temple was left standing all over North India. They escaped destruction only where Muslim power did not gain access to them for reasons such as dense forests. Otherwise it was a continuous spell of vandalism." [7]

Most of the temple lands and their other religious assets in Kashmir belonged to some known entities, namely, Dharmarth Trust, Bajrang Dev Baba Dharma Das Koul Mandir (popularly called Bab Dharam Das)[8],Ganesh Mandir, Durga Nag Mandir and Hari Parbat. In addition to these institutions, some local committees formed by Kashmiri Pandits also managed some temple properties, estimated to be nearly 500 in number. During Dogra rule, when Dharmarth Trust was set up by Maharaja Ranbir Singh, he had incorporated a provision into its by-laws which stipulated that selling of any temple

land would amount to killing of 100 cows. This had the desired effect and temple lands and other assets remained untouched by the unscrupulous elements.

Immediately after exodus, a large number of Pandits' religious shrines were targeted. These places were attacked by frenzied mobs bent upon wanton destruction of centuries old structures of great magnificence and heritage. With the departure of Pandits from the Valley, a deathly silence fell on a large number of religious places, where sizeable congregations used to assemble on auspicious days. Some of these places were closed down; others, like the famous Sharika Temple at Hari Parbat, were covered by a worn out tarpaulin to appease the majority community. Places of Hindu social organisations, used mainly for socio-cultural activities, were burnt down or bombed. Rocket attacks were also carried out to destroy or damage the Kheer Bhavani temple at Tulamulla and Ganesh Temple at Ganpathyaar in Srinagar. Both attacks were off the target, causing little damage. Cremation grounds and some holy springs, alongwith their adjacent lands, were appropriated by unscrupulous elements. The cremation ground at Sopore and Sadhu Ganga Temple at Kandi in Kupwara district were encroached upon. The sprawling cremation grounds at villages Sagam and Fatehpora have been appropriated by the Wakf board. The famous temple at Mattan lost 33 kanals of its land to similar illegal occupation.

In many cases, the process of illegally occupying the lands of the Hindu religious sites started much before the actual exodus. Biased government, working under the dictates of the Islamists and prodded on by its Islamised bureaucracy, itself became a usurper of Hindu religious sites on one pretext or the other. The cremation ground at Sopore was taken over to construct a bridge over it. The land belonging to Durga Nag Trust in Srinagar too was taken over by the Wakf board. Subsequently, a shopping complex, named Suleiman Complex was constructed on it. Vide its order, SRO-702 dated December 31, 1984, the entire temple and

its land was transferred by the State Government to the Wakf board. In the same manner, Public Health Engineering Department of the State constructed a tank over the holy spring of Guddar (Godawri) in Kulgam. Near the same place at Manzhgam, a primary school has been constructed on the temple land. A proposal had also been floated to convert the holy spring and the temple complex at Manghoma, near Pulwama, into a water supply scheme.

According to a statement made by the Home Minister of India in Parliament on March 12, 1993, 38 temples/shrines were demolished, damaged and desecrated in Kashmir between 1989 through 1991. Year wise data is given below:

Year	Temples Demolished/Damaged
1989	13
1990	09
1991	16
Total	38

The above figures presented a conservative estimate by the government for obvious reasons. The actual number was much larger and stood at approximately 68, as the state government never collected the data from remote areas and deliberately played down the issue in the same manner in which it hid the exodus of Pandits. The factual data was collected from Pandit refugees who were witness to such destruction. Centuries old idols, like the rare Sahstri-Netra Shivling in Silgam Temple, on the road to Pahalgam, have been destroyed. Similarly, the Hanuman Temple near Hari Parbat was also completely destroyed. Sanctum sanctorums of many temples were defiled by smearing idols with filth. Consequent to the destruction of Babri Masjid on December 6, 1992, 39 more temples were destroyed in Kashmir. The media, as usual, was reticent to report these incidents. Kashmiri refugees in Jammu did hold demonstrations; but these were dismissed as part of the communal politics, till the

Sahayita Samiti, All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference and the local unit of Bharatiya Janata Party, produced irrefutable evidence about it. The trend of destruction of temples continued much after the exodus. Two decades after the insurgency broke out in Kashmir, the number of temples destroyed stood at approximately 60. Lieutenant General (Retd) SK Sinha, former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir writes, "What happened a couple of years earlier in Jammu and Kashmir was, if anything, more reprehensible. Some 60 functional Hindu temples were destroyed, but the secular brigade and the secular media suffer from collective amnesia about it and the ethnic cleansing of Kashmir Valley because of which Pandits are now living as refugees in camps."[9]

Of late there have been reports emanating from the Valley which point to a new trend as far as the temple properties are concerned. It is believed that some unscrupulous elements, working in connivance with land mafia have started selling off temple properties in Kashmir. According to a news report the situation is serious enough to attract the State Government's notice, which subsequently decided to have the matter investigated. State Revenue Minister Aijaz Ahmad Khan was quoted to have said, "We have taken note of the concern expressed by the legislators about the sale of property of Hindu shrines by their management and will probe the disposal of such properties."[10] Even the management of these temples is illegally constituted. "As such temple trusts have not had elections for the last 17 years, caretakers and outsiders have been controlling temple assets worth crores of rupees, and are now selling or leasing them out," said Kashmiri Pandit Sangharsh Samiti President, Mr Sanjay Tickoo. Property of big temples like the Ramji Temple in Srinagar, which is worth crores of rupees, is being sold or leased out allegedly on the management's instructions. Similar stories concerning other temples have also been reported. Newspapers also reported that Vaital Bhairva shrine at Motiyar, Rainawari, Srinagar, has been ransacked

and its Dharamshala occupied by relatives of the local MLA. It is even reported that Jammu and Kashmir Dharmarth Trust has sold the land of Pratepeshwar Temple, Kohnikon and Barbarshah. The Prayag Temple at Shadipora, Srinagar, too, witnessed plunder and later encroachment.

There were nearly 46 temples on the left and right banks of River Jhelum, which held great reverence for Pandits in the Valley. Most of these were gutted/ looted at the time of exodus. As late as March 2010, the State's Revenue Minister, Raman Bhalla admitted in the State Assembly that 170 temples had been 'damaged' in 'militancy related' violence. The same figures were quoted by Jitender Singh, Minister of State for Home Affairs in the Union Government while speaking in the Rajya Sabha on August 22, 2012 (*Time of India*, Delhi Edition, August 23, 2012). However, Kashmiri Pandits refute these figures and put the same at 550. The minister also admitted that 113 kanals of temple land was grabbed in Shopian alone.

After the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley, a large number of temples were left without any *Pujari*/caretaker. As ground situation improved, many *Pujaris* came from outside the state and filled-in this vacuum. Over a period of time, with the assistance of unscrupulous elements in the state administration, they became *Mahants* controlling these temples and their properties. In due course these *Mahants*, in connivance with the local mafia are now selling these lands with fictitious records and other papers. "Officially, there are only 404 temples in Kashmir, owning 2,081 kanals (260.12 acres) of land. In fact, government figure is much less than actual figure. For instance, as per official record, land owned by Sheetalnath Mandir in Srinagar is far less than what it actually has,"[11] writes Tariq Bhatt. He further writes, "Seventy per cent of its properties have been compromised, encroached upon, leased or sold after 1990 by non-Kashmiri mahants in connivance with land sharks."[12]

Education

Disruption caused in the education of their children due to exodus was, perhaps, the most serious fallout of Kashmiri Pandits' exodus. For a community that boasted of a high literacy rate, not being able to send its children to schools and colleges was a great tragedy. Educating their children, no matter how poor the parents, has remained central to their existence for as long as one can remember. After the exodus, they were not able to provide proper coaching to students preparing for various examinations. This resulted in loss of precious years for the affected children. Besides, different sessions of education for Kashmir and Jammu regions also added to the problem of maintaining continuity. For those aspiring to seek admission to professional colleges or seek jobs based on their educational qualifications, it was near impossible to do so in the absence of relevant documents/degrees, as these had been left behind in the Valley.

An important feature of education of Kashmiri Pandit children is the gender equality which is so visible. Though, in later years closer to exodus, admissions to technical and professional institutes and higher education, recorded larger percentage of males compared to females. In 2001, the total number of literate population in Jammu and Kashmir was 54 per cent (66 per cent for males and 42 per cent for females). Among the refugee population in 1989–90, it was 61.40 per cent for males and 40.33 per cent for females, which increased to 69.50 per cent for males and 54.65 per cent for females in 2002. It was later revealed that refugees living in camps were worse off educationally than those living outside. As large percentage of refugees living in camps were those who had migrated from rural areas, educationally they suffered the most.

After getting uprooted from the Valley, the school and college going children had nowhere to go. Jammu, Udhampur and many

other places, which boasted of heavy concentration of Pandit refugees, neither had the physical infrastructure in terms of schools/colleges nor did they have adequate teaching staff. The disruption thus caused to their education had a devastating effect on the continuity of their education. Some children got themselves admitted in public schools run by private organisations or individuals. But few could afford their fees. The situation was even worse in higher secondary and above classes, as the staff and other facilities available were inadequate. As large number of the displaced children were on the rolls of the schools run by Hindu educational societies, like DAV (Dayanand Anglo Vedic) and Vishwa Bharti Trust, and those run by Christian Church Mission societies, it would have been better if these societies were permitted to open branches of their schools in areas having heavy refugee concentration, to ensure that students already part of their institutions in the Valley did not suffer. Despite making repeated pleas to the government to allow them to start the schools on temporary basis, the permission did not come till end of 1993.

Establishment of four Kendriya Vidyalaya Schools purely for Kashmiri Pandit refugees, announced by the Central Government, never materialised. However, Jagmohan, during his tenure as the Governor, issued orders to start camp schools/colleges in Jammu and Udhampur to enable the children to continue their education without break. This was a well thought-out move as it involved least effort and expenditure due to the fact that a large number of refugee teachers were readily available to take on the task of teaching. Consequently, the camp schools started functioning in canvas covered sheds and teachers among the refugees were drafted to start teaching. The camp colleges were organised in existing colleges by starting evening shifts after the local students had finished their classes. This caused the least disruption. Similar departments were created for postgraduate students.

The indifference and the apathy of the state government towards these camp schools became evident soon enough: lack of

accommodation, poor sanitation, inadequate teaching aids and other allied problems became the order of the day. Numerous delegations were sent to all concerned to plead with them to carry out some improvement in the situation, but in vain. In due course, these schools came to be run under tattered bits of canvas, which did not provide a speck of shade during the scorching summer or shelter from rain during monsoon. It would not have cost the state government much if children in the camps had been provided with books, uniforms, writing material, etc., free of cost. Mid-day meal scheme, which is applicable in large number of schools in various states, could have easily been implemented in the camp schools, too. But this was not done. No effort was made to provide professional counsellors in selected camp schools, to guide the children in choosing right careers in keeping with their aptitude.

The admission of refugee children to various professional colleges became almost impossible; in Jammu, the seats were exclusively reserved for students from Jammu region, and they could not go back to Kashmir from where they had been thrown out at gun point. Even though their share in professional/technical colleges/postgraduate departments located in Kashmir was barely 8 to 10 per cent, even this was now denied to them due to their inability to go there. In any case, the schools and colleges run by Hindu educational societies, like the DAV or Vishwa Bharti Trust were either burnt down or taken over by the militant-sponsored Muslim organisations.

The post-exodus period registered a significant increase in the discontinuation of the education of Pandit children; eight per cent for boys and 11 per cent for girls at the school level; 24 per cent for boys and 30 per cent for girls at the college level; and one per cent each for boys and girls at the postgraduation and professional college level. Most of the figures mentioned above, comprised of boys and girls from the camp locations, mostly belonging to agricultural background. This discontinuation in education was due to various

factors, chief among them being the changed living environment, which was harsh and provided inadequate living space, economic distress, loss of interest in education due to non-availability of jobs, non-existence of suitable educational institution in the close vicinity of camps, confusion about the change of university, negative and discriminatory attitude of Kashmir University and finally, the deliberate, unsympathetic and rigid attitude of the state government, which did not allow flexibility of jurisdiction that would have helped a large number of students to continue their education without break. In the immediate aftermath of the exodus, many students faced serious problems of admission.

These problems, however, were overcome in due course of time by the refugees' own efforts and determination to pursue education. Gradually, in the post-exodus period, proportion of the educated and trained personnel showed marginal increase, though not among those living in camps and having rural background. This period also witnessed increase in the enrollment of children, both males and females, into colleges and professional training establishments. However, there was an increase in the rate of dropouts of camp students from schools and colleges, particularly among girls. Later, some state governments offered reservations to the children of refugees in various professional colleges, though the children from camps could not take as much advantage of these reservations as the non-camp refugee children, due to their inability to fulfill eligibility criteria.

According to the pilot study conducted by Community Education Development Fund in June 2004, about 68 per cent families financed the cost of education of their children's higher education by either taking bank loans or by distress sale of their properties. The survey also found that proportion of educated and trained males had marginally increased for postgraduation, professional and vocational training. In the case of females, there had been an increase in the percentage of vocational training and at graduation level, though

this percentage was lower for those living in camps as compared to non-camp inhabitants. Another fact that came to light was that families preferred to extend the education of their children because the avenues of employment for refugee youth in state services, after the exodus had almost entirely dried up. Gradually, the male and female population of refugees in the age group 6–24, attending educational institutions registered a significant increase. In the pre-exodus period, an overwhelming majority of students enrolled only in the schools. However, the later-post-exodus period saw significant enrollments in the colleges and professional training institutes. In the pre-exodus period, it was 82 per cent for males and 67 per cent for females, which increased to 99 per cent for males and 97 per cent for females. This increase in the percentage of refugee students enrolling in various schools and colleges, despite their displacement and none-too-happy living environment, were in keeping with the perception held by Pandits, who have traditionally considered knowledge to be a source of livelihood. This perception only got reinforced in the changed circumstances, because now they had nothing to fall back upon, except their education.

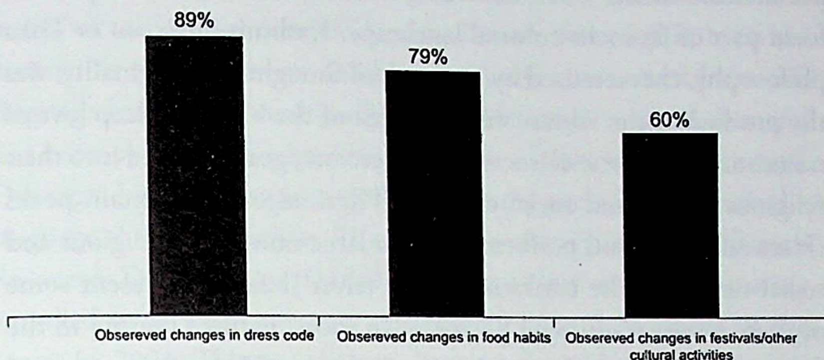
This trend also owed a lot to the easing of admission criteria and special reservation quotas for refugee students by the Central government and some state governments. During the period between 1990–2002, 19 boys and 8 girls per 100 refugee Pandit families were admitted to various professional training courses throughout the country. Bulk of these reservations (87 per cent) were provided by states other than Jammu and Kashmir; Maharashtra and Gujarat being the leading states in this regard. Jammu and Kashmir, however, provided seats to girls among the refugees for training in Industrial Training Institutes and Polytechnic Training colleges located in Jammu, which awarded diplomas. As is evident, whereas other states took the lead in coming to the rescue of refugee students by reserving seats for them in various degree colleges, their own state felt no such need. Even

the reservations given in diploma courses were limited to institutions in Jammu division, which were not funded by either the state or the Central government. These reservations, offered by various state governments to refugee students went a long way in equipping them with the desired technical skills that ensured their better job prospects and greatly alleviated the sufferings of thousands of such students.

Cultural and Ethnic Identity

The greatest challenge that Kashmiri Pandit community has faced in the two decades of its exodus is the difficulty in preserving its culture. Their forced displacement from Kashmir resulted in the snapping of their cultural links with the Valley that sustained it. Culture is a complete pattern of social behaviour of an ethnic group, its practices and collective thinking, manifested through group behaviour. An ethnic group's culture and worldview are inter-related. Religion, philosophy and value systems of the group have great bearing on it. Culture is not static as its dynamic nature enables it to adopt, reject and evolve constantly.

India is formed of varied regions, communities, languages, ethnicities, etc. Its diversity represents the sum total of every community's own peculiar culture. This cultural diversity is developed over centuries and is influenced by history, religion, climate and geography. Culture, including rituals, music, dance, folklore, marriages, celebrations of various festivals, etc., are products of, and closely related to the place of habitation. It is through various stages of cultural development that an ethnic group assumes a particular form, which eventually becomes its identity. Social and cultural aspects, which form the two inseparable parts of a group's identity, are inter-dependent. In addition, historical vicissitudes, through which an ethnic group passes, leave their own visible imprint on its identity and racial (ethical) values form the core of its collective thinking or its distinct identity. "When a particular group come through quirks of



Source: Figures quoted from the study conducted by the Centre for Minority Studies, Jammu and Kashmir.

history into social interaction with any other alien group, the former tries to absorb some traits from latter,"[13] writes GL Jalali.

Leaving its usual place of habitation temporarily/permanently can result in serious set-back to the very cultural identity of a community. This also results in the submerging of cultural identity of the displaced in the larger cultural milieu of the place where they have moved to. Such cultural transformation can adversely jeopardise the very existence of a community that has a distinct culture. "Loss of identity of a well-defined ethnic group can result in the speedy disintegration of the group character."[14] Uprooting of a large segment of people from their original place of habitation, inevitably results in huge disruption of its social customs and cultural identity. Such social disruptions can seriously hamper a community's growth and its self-confidence, ultimately leading to its extinction.

Kashmiri Pandit culture, which has evolved over centuries, is vibrant and multi-hued, with its unique features reflecting its richness. Being a persecuted community for centuries, its culture has evolved by constant reappraisal and its need to survive and sustain itself against heavy odds. Many myths and legends, dating back to

pre-historic times, when the Valley was still *Satisar* (see chapter-1), form part of its socio-cultural landscape. Kashmir Shaivism or Trika philosophy, characterised by its depth of thought and originality, was the product of the vibrant environment of the Valley. A deep love of nature and its diverse elements has, therefore, got ingrained into their religious rituals and social customs. Pilgrimage to mountain peaks (Harmukh, etc) and performance of a large number of religious and social rituals on the banks of Vitasta (river Jhelum) represent some of these sacred traditional practices. In short, nature's bounty in the form of gushing rivulets and icy springs that Kashmir is endowed with, inculcated in the community an immense love for nature, which got interwoven with their social and religious customs.

Kashmiri Pandits belong to a distinct socio-cultural group with its roots deeply imbedded into the history, culture and environment of Kashmir. Such identity can be preserved only if the whole or part of the group continues to inhabit that specific area. Once the whole ethnic group vacates that place, it gets unhinged from its moorings. Under the circumstances, for Kashmiri Pandits, to preserve their distinct ethnic identity has become very difficult. This difficulty has got further complicated because Kashmiri Pandits are a small community and after exodus, are compelled to live in penny packets throughout the world. Due to these reasons, Kashmiri Pandits are in clear danger of losing their identity as a distinct ethnic group. This, despite the fact that even after suffering persecution and being evicted from the Valley many times in the past, Kashmiri Pandits have retained their core beliefs. Sir Walter Lawrence writes in his book, *Vale of Kashmir*, "*Bhata, Bhata, Kaw Bata*" — (Kashmiri Pandits are knit together like a pack of crows).

Language plays a significant role in preserving distinct identity of any ethnic group. It is not merely a medium of communication but a repository of the critical nuances of cultural moorings of a community. One of the biggest casualties of the exodus has been the

Kashmiri language. Use of Kashmiri language by the children as a means of communication within their homes after exodus, is on the decline. At the same time, children of the refugees cannot learn this language because no commonly acceptable script exists. A demand had been made that Kashmiri language in another alternative script, Devnagri, be taught, so as to enable the young generation to learn the language of their forefathers. This demand was accepted by the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry, but was subsequently annulled by it when the new government came into power at the centre in 2004. This was done to appease the majority community of Kashmir, that had demanded the recognition of Urdu script for teaching the language. This has dealt a serious blow to the aspirations of the young generation and pushed them further away from their roots. Bulk of the children of refugees living in Jammu, particularly in camps, who used Urdu language for reading and writing while in Kashmir, continued to prefer Urdu. However, the same cannot be said of refugees living outside the State. They now prefer to communicate in Hindi, which is the official language of a number of states, where refugees live and where it is the most commonly used medium of written and spoken communication. In the years immediately after exodus, use of Kashmiri language for communication was confined to children and grandchildren living in refugee camps. However, even here, the language has undergone significant changes.

Other damage to cultural identity was caused by the loss of the rare and invaluable manuscripts, paintings, objects of art and antiques left behind by the fleeing community. These were subsequently looted by the anti-social elements. This loss of treasure trove is a huge blow to the community's cultural heritage.

Another phenomenon that is becoming increasingly visible in the community is the breakup of the joint family system, something alien to its culture. Over a period of time, splits in the families of Pandit refugees have become quite evident. It has been noticed that

traditional joint families split faster into nuclear families, as space crunch hastened this process. Roughly 37 per cent families split. 1,979 families split into 3,076 households, mainly due to lack of accommodation; a combined split rate of 55 per cent. The splits were noticed more among population that had migrated from rural areas, as most of these people lived in large joint families in their villages in Kashmir. Such breakups went against the socio-cultural ethos of the rural community and put the social security of older people at grave risk. This situation, besides creating social, cultural and economic insecurity, also prevented joint effort when any member of the family was faced with a serious challenge. The trend was also reflected in the reduced size of an average family, which showed a decline from six persons per household in 1989–90, to four persons in 2002. Among the urban refugees, the decline in the size was sharper, i.e., from five to three, compared to rural refugee households, whose size reduced from five to four persons. Spatial disintegration due to forced displacement further accentuated this problem.

Late female marriages due to disintegration of society and lower incomes, has also been noticed. Another trend adding to this problem is the desire of parents to secure higher income grooms for their daughters away from immediate surroundings and outside the community. This has resulted in the creation of imbalance in sex ratio. Marital status too has shown significant changes, as a consequence of the influence of other cultures, breakdown of joint family system and marriages outside the community. Increased rates of divorce are a reflection of the combined effect of these changes.

Changes are also visible in dress code. These changes, starkly visible among the refugees, are mostly forced by the climate and prevailing fashion trends.

Similarly, the food habits have also undergone some changes, partly due to climate and partly due to economic reasons. Kashmiri

vegetables had a special place in the menu of a Kashmiri Pandit household while in the Valley. However, due to heavy demand for these in Jammu, whatever little came from Kashmir, became exceedingly costly, resulting in refugees slowly getting used to what was locally available. Some refugees found the new menu difficult to digest, but force of circumstances ensured that the change finally took effect. For refugees living outside the state, this change was forced on them much faster.

Exodus has also brought about changes in the celebration of religious festivals and observance of socio-cultural rituals. Though there are many similarities in the observance of religious festivals/ practices between the Kashmiri Pandits and outside Hindus, the regional imperatives have, over centuries, induced many modifications and innovations of significant nature into the former's observances. The impact of local customs, rituals and religious festivals is evident in the social milieu of the Pandits after exodus. Such phenomenon is visible more among non-camp refugees than among those living in the camps. However, by and large, Kashmiri Pandits have stuck to their traditional practices. One of the main reasons for this is that a large concentration of refugee Pandits exists in Jammu, which is not too far from the Valley. This has ensured some degree of continuity.

A significant number of married Kashmiri Pandit women no longer put on the *Dejihor*, a traditional symbol of marriage; akin to *Mangalsutra* among married women outside the Valley. Many women have discontinued the use of *Dejihor* due to the fact that being made of gold, it is prone to snatching by petty criminals and therefore, carries a security risk in various cities and towns of India, where refugees now live. Its use by the married women is now restricted to social gatherings and special get-togethers. Other cultural ingress of outside influence can be seen by way of Pandit women adopting other non-Kashmiri Hindu practices, like wearing *sindoor, payal, bichhu* and *nuth* or even piercing the nose. Significant

changes have been noticed among the bridal wear too; wherein the brides wear non-traditional dresses like lenhga and choli, etc. Women have also started observing non-traditional fast, just to be a part of a dominant social group in their new environment. A surprising inclusion of the imbibed culture has been the demand for dowry. Coupled with increase in the inter-caste/inter-community marriages, the exclusivity of Kashmiri Pandit culture is certainly under threat. It may be mentioned that these cultural changes have occurred across the cross-section of refugee population.

Recreational facilities and avenues for refugees have literally dried up. There are no opportunities for young men to indulge in sports/ cultural activity due to their non-availability. This has resulted in the youngsters staying glued to the television or listening to family gossip; both do not contribute in any significant manner to their overall development. In Kashmir, summer time was a season for picnics and excursions. These used to be organised both at the institutional, as also at the individual level. Exodus put paid to this activity; in the process, drying up another source of entertainment, so essential for overall development of the body and mind.

Despite the fact that Kashmiri Pandits have and are showing a great deal of resilience as far as maintaining their separate ethno-religious identity is concerned, the fact is that the community is up against heavy odds as far as preserving its unique identity is concerned. A ray of hope in this is the proximity of a large concentration of refugees to the Valley and living in clusters that permit retention of the essential features of their socio-cultural customs. Besides, after exodus from the Valley, the community has recreated in many places, the iconic symbols of its cultural identity that existed in Kashmir. This will enable the younger generation to identify itself with its own customs, cultural heritage and the community's ethno-cultural identity. These icons attract people out of sheer faith or devotion to their teachings. It is interesting to note that nearly one hundred

such icons have been created in and around Jammu alone, which attract hundreds of devotees, linking them, in a manner to Kashmir valley. In addition, nearly 40 anniversaries of sages and saints are also celebrated annually, thus recreating the flavour of Kashmir to some degree. These attempts nourish and re-establish connectivity with the roots, back in the Valley.

Irrespective of all these positive pointers, the fact is that Kashmiri Pandit identity as a distinct ethnic group is under severe threat. Though the community has made herculean attempts to preserve the uniqueness of its identity, in the long run, the result of such efforts will remain beyond the control of this community; particularly so, because vested interests in the Valley are bent upon foisting on Kashmiris a monolithic, theocratic and exclusivist creed, which is alien to it.

Health

Health of the members of a community that has got displaced from its original habitat due to violence and conflict, rarely gets the attention that it deserves. Both the community elders/leaders, as also the government agencies are so engaged in the immediate task of providing the much needed succor to the displaced, that health issues get neglected. In the long run, these issues magnify to pose a serious challenge. As a renowned doctor says, "...Many of the most profound issues of health and well being of communities and individuals, as a result of ethnic and political violence, are barely touched upon. The consequence is a failure to address many of the most obvious and complex health problems found in nearly all such societies."[15]

The physical, mental and spiritual health of the Kashmiri Pandit community suffered great ravages as a result of their sudden and forced displacement from their ancient and ancestral habitat to an alien environment. This displacement resulted in the loss of their homes and hearths and all material possessions. The new

environment of tropical heat and unhygienic living conditions created collective distress which rendered the elderly, infants, pregnant women, the disabled, the chronically ill, and the vulnerable to serious sickness. Tensions of making a new beginning outside their familiar surroundings, whose main features were overcrowding, poor quality of water and sanitation, and contact with various infections, took a heavy toll of this vulnerable section of refugees. Having low immunity levels, these people suffered enormously in the absence of any organised healthcare mechanism and specialised medical care. Life saving drugs were not available in the hastily organised camps and were too costly outside. There was no sign of diagnostic laboratories inside the camps. To make matters worse, the tented accommodation was created in the most inappropriate surroundings, like flood prone nallahs and gullies which had tall grass and scrub and thorny plants growing all over. The unfortunate refugees living there were exposed to the scorching heat of summer, creeping insects and poisonous reptiles and torrential rains during monsoon.

Heat-related Deaths

Year	No. of deaths
1990	1056
1991	409
1992	397
1993	178
1994	89
1995	62
1996	43
1997	148

Source: *Report on the Impact of Migration on the Socio-economic Conditions of Kashmiri Displaced People;* Jammu and Kashmir Centre for Minority Studies.

Pandits were not used to such environment, nor were they provided with any wherewithal to counter or minimise its ill-effects. The refugees were subsequently provided with one-room tenements, which did not vastly improve the situation. The study carried out by the Centre for Minority Studies of the State (CMS), summarised the situation as follows:

"Muthi camp, having 498 one-room tenements, was housing 2,345 inmates; the size of the rooms being 10x10 feet. Each room was packed with more than seven members of a family, belonging to three generations."

Among the young, heat and tension-related diseases took a heavy toll. This included diabetes, hypertension, heart problems, kidney failure, heat stroke and even snakebite. Not used to living in such conditions back home in the Valley, many refugees became victims of serious disease, like heart ailments, trauma, anxiety, panic attacks, depression, sleep disorder, nightmares, frozen shoulder, arthritis, muscle cramps, irritable bowels, refugee belly syndrome and much else. The old, infirm, women and children became sick due to diseases bred by the reaction of tropical rains with the filth and squalor of the camps. Post-exodus, the major causes of death were such diseases that had not contributed to mortality in a major way in the Valley. These were liver diseases and hepatitis, snakebites, stroke and paralysis and sunstroke. This resulted in the increased mortality rate of the members of the community.

High mortality rate, coupled with very low growth rate, created one of the most serious adverse effects of exodus. According to a paper presented by Dr KL Choudhary at a seminar organised by Organisation Research Foundation, New Delhi, on September 3, 2003, 108 Kashmiri Pandits had died in 1993 (three years after exodus from the Valley), while only 42 were born. In 1995, the situation was even worse: as against five births there were 200 deaths.

In 1997, there were 134 deaths compared to 85 births. Another study concluded that in 1990, 1,056 people died because of heat-related diseases. This figure was 409, 397 and 178 for the years 1991, 1992 and 1993, respectively. Between 1997 and 2003, there were 148 such deaths. Most deaths that occurred were certainly preventable. Crude death rates in the case of men increased from 5 to 7, and in respect of females from 4.5 to 4.8. The CMS study came to the same conclusion.

Some other relatively unheard of diseases in Kashmir also made their presence felt in the refugee community. These were hypertension, mental depression, psychiatric disorders, diabetes, skin diseases, ulcer/acid dyspepsia, asthma/allergies, intestinal disorders, kidney disease and malnutrition/anaemia. The CMS study also found that some other diseases, like the stress syndromes, including cardio-vascular stress, stress-belly, psycho-trauma, endocrine stress, musculo-skeletol stress and cranial stress had also become common among the refugees. It was recorded by the study that after exodus, more than 36 per cent women became infertile by the time they reach 40 years of age. An amazingly high percentage of 79 per cent suffered from depression, while 76 per cent suffered from anxiety disorder, phobias and panic attacks.

"The incidence of tuberculosis, renal stones, renal failure and asthma had also increased markedly", says Dr P.K. Hak, Professor at Srinagar Medical College. He further writes in a study, "While the incidence of ailments the exiled community suffered traditionally has increased, a host of new diseases and syndromes, previously unknown or rare, is also afflicting them... Malaria has caused great morbidity among refugees because the community lacked the immunity acquired by people living in endemic areas. Overcrowding has caused a greater number of pneumonia and tuberculosis cases. Skin diseases afflict almost everyone. Most patients suffer from renal colic, renal stones and renal infections. Angina pectoris has got precipitated.

Hypertension is common even among youth... stress diabetes is a new syndrome. A large number of displaced Kashmiri diabetics have no other visible factors except stress."[16] Renowned neurologist of the State, Dr Sushil Razdan, was quoted by *Daily Excelsior* of September 3, 2003, as having said, "Dozens of patients have died because of heat stroke. The incidence of neuro-cystocircosis has also increased. Older people, very young, and women are the worst sufferers." A study carried out by an eminent diabetologist and a senior faculty member of Government Medical College, Jammu, too brought out that refugees between the ages of 28–40 had developed diabetes, only after forced displacement, which created great stress.

Many refugees could not cope with the situation and succumbed to the severe strain imposed on them by living in exile. Others could not reconcile psychologically to the changed conditions and became mental wrecks. Late marriages, late conception, premature menopause, reduced fertility span, diminished libido, hypo-sexuality of exile, forced celibacy, sexual deprivation, contraception and elective abortions were the other ill-effects of displacement, on the health of the refugee community. High divorce rates, accompanied with low birth rates further compounded the problem. Nearly 36 per cent women reported developing ovarian failure, an entirely new trend. A study conducted by Department of Human Development and Family Studies (Kansas State University, Manhattan) among 42 Kashmiri Pandit families living in large community halls, revealed that exodus had affected the health of children seriously, resulting in their falling sick intermittently. Insufficient primary health centres and heavy rush in government hospitals in Jammu, forced the refugees to seek medical attention in private clinics, putting additional burden on their already limited resources. In the pre-exodus period, the refugees spent 3 per cent of their income on medical expenses; the same went up to 5–10 per cent in the post-exodus period. Healthcare services in Jammu could not cope with the sudden increase in the

number of patients it had to take care of. Thus, costly private medical care was the only available alternative.

Like every other issue, the State government made no efforts to provide basic healthcare to the displaced Pandits, particularly those living in camps. If the government had the least concern for the health needs of refugees, it could have established a fully-equipped primary health centre, with adequate investigative and diagnostic set-up and a gynaecological unit, for each camp. The refugees could have been covered by health/life insurance, which would have cost the exchequer not more than ₹ 40–50 crores. Then, in 2006, the State government had made a provision of ₹ 0.80 crores per year for providing healthcare facilities to the refugees. This budgetary provision was barely enough to cover the salaries of the employees dealing with this issue. Lack of availability of medicines and high morbidity rate was the direct result of this inadequate budgetary allocation and rudimentary healthcare system existing to take care of the Pandit refugees.

Drop in Population

Improper living conditions, inadequate living space, lack of privacy, living in unfamiliar surroundings and lack of medical care, resulted in significant drop in population of Kashmiri Pandits, compared to the national average; male population growing at a lower rate than female population. In due course of time, it is likely to threaten the very survival of this ethnic group. This is one of the most serious consequences of the exodus. Whereas the annual rate of growth for the entire country in 2006 was 1.95 per cent (Jammu and Kashmir had 2.77 per cent), for refugees it was recorded at 0.56 per cent. Gender-wise too, the discrepancy was quite pronounced, i.e., 0.50 per cent for males and 0.61 per cent for females. Lower growth rate is directly attributable to stressful living conditions, inimical environment, late marriages, shorter fertility period and

reduced birth rates due to economic difficulties that discouraged bigger families.

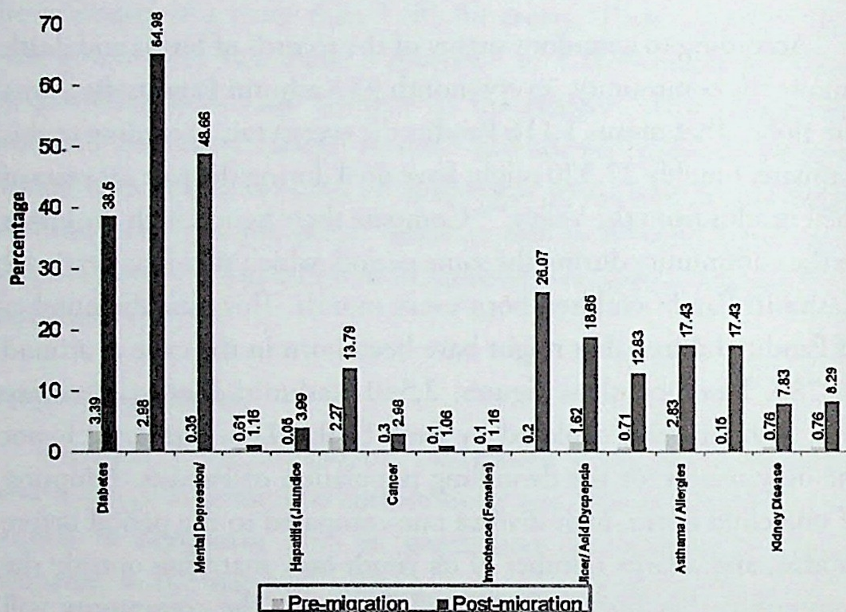
It was hoped that with the passage of time and improvement in overall living conditions of refugees in and outside the camps, there will be some improvement in the situation which has led to the drop in the population growth of Pandits. However, these hopes have been belied. According to the recently published news item, "there is a big gap between birth and death rates among the minuscule Kashmiri Pandit community for the past 20 years."[17]

According to a random survey of the records of births and death among the community, "every month 93 Kashmiri Pandits die across the globe. That means 1,116 Pandits die every year. According to this estimate, roughly 22,320 might have died during the past 20 years of their exodus from the Valley."[18] Compare these figures with the births in the community during the same period, which stands at nearly 82 Kashmiri Pandit children born every month. This puts the number of Pandit children that might have been born in the exile at around 19,780. Based on these figures, 2,540 Kashmiri Pandits die every year without being replaced by fresh births. Low birth rate is not the only reason for the dwindling population of Pandits. Adoption of one-child norm, high divorce rate compared to the period before exodus, and a large number of its youth now marrying outside the community, has further aggravated the issue. The community will have to give this issue a serious thought if they wish to see its survival.

Morbidity Pattern

Gender ratio has also recorded a significant change; out of tune with the national scenario. During the pre-exodus period, there were 1,044 females per 1,000 males. This increased to 1,059 by 2002. Compare this with the national ratio, which was 927 females for 1,000 males in 1991, which increased marginally to 933 in 2001. It

may be pointed out that the increase in the sex ratio was significantly higher in rural refugee population than among the urban refugee population. This was due to higher female literacy, better status for women based on equity, lower mortality rate among females and increased life expectancy of females at birth. Late marriages of females due to displacement, lower incomes and search for financially better off grooms from other communities/locations has further added



to this state of affairs. Due to the significantly lower growth rate for males, the community will not be able to retain replacement levels in future. This will result in the decrease in population, with far-reaching effects on the very survival of the community in the long run. The greater proportion of population in higher age group without commensurate replacement level, will result in large number of older and senile population becoming pre-dominant.

Loss of Political Relevance

Kashmiri Pandits have been alienated from the Valley's mainstream politics ever since 1956, when the State adopted the Indian Constitution. Whereas at the national level, Nehru included Article 370 into the Indian Constitution as a safeguard against the possibility of Indian Hindu majority riding roughshod over the Muslim minority in Kashmir, no such safeguards were created to protect minorities, like Kashmiri Pandits, Hindus from Jammu and Buddhists of Ladakh, from an overwhelming Muslim majority, at the sub-regional level. This, despite the fact that Kashmiri Hindus had been clamouring for such safeguards ever since 1931. Letters exchanged between Prem Nath Bazaz and Jawahar Lal Nehru (both were friends) dated June 24, 1936 and July 8, 1936, bring out this fact clearly. How the lack of safeguards affected the Pandits can be gauged from the fact that in 1947, with a population of nearly 15 per cent, Kashmiri Pandits had a considerable presence in at least six constituencies; four in Srinagar and two in Anantnag district.

Sheikh Abdullah's ambivalence, radical land reforms carried out by the first Interim Government (see Chapte-10), lack of economic opportunities and political uncertainty had created such a sense of insecurity among the Pandits that 20 per cent of them had migrated to places outside the valley by 1950. Reservation for Muslims in education and employment, events of 1986 in South Kashmir and political mobilisation on religious platform resorted to by the mainstream political parties, gave a further impetus to this exodus, with Pandits continuing to move out of the State in search of security and better economic prospects. By 1981, their population was reduced to five per cent. Pandits have, however, consistently questioned these figures as a deliberate attempt at under-assessing their numbers in order to marginalise them politically. Their claim is borne out by the fact that 400,000 Pandits migrated outside the Valley in 1989–90. Out of these, approximately 170,000 are

registered in Jammu alone. Some social organisations of Pandits claim that approximately the same number left the Valley between 1947 and 1989. According to Prof Saifudin Soz, a minister at the Centre said "there are roughly 700,000 Kashmiri Pandits, with their largest concentration of nearly 300,000 in Jammu, 100,000 each in Delhi, other metro cities, different states, and 10,000 living abroad. Pre-1947 displaced Pandits are nearly 70,000 and present in the Valley are roughly 20,000."[19] Some estimates put the number of Pandits in the whole world at 1.5 million. However, a figure of 700,000, quoted in a seminar at Organisation Research Foundation in 2003, and in the seminar held in the Political Department of Jammu University on Kashmiri refugees, is generally accepted to be closer to the actual figure.

After the exodus of 1990, their numbers in the Valley fell sharply, and by 1991, Pandits constituted merely 0.1 per cent of Kashmir's population. By 2010, the number of Pandits left in there was less than 5,000.

In the elections of 1952, 1962 and 1967, Kashmiri Pandits had won from three constituencies, namely two from Srinagar and one from Anantnag district. By 1972, they were left with one constituency of Pahalgam, perhaps because of its association with the holy cave of Amarnath and the pilgrimage centre of Mattan. Pandits could not win even this seat on their own strength. Their dwindling numbers had gradually made them irrelevant to the political process in the state; after exodus their irrelevance was complete. Out of 154,000 Kashmiri Pandits registered with the Relief Commission Office, only 22,818 have been included in the voters' list; 50 per cent of refugees are no longer registered as voters in the Valley. Even among the registered voters, only 23 per cent have exercised the franchise in the last elections. Their irrelevance was confirmed when NC, for the first time, did not put up any Pandit candidate in 2002 elections. Ironically, in 1996 elections, when the majority

community of Kashmir boycotted the polls, some Muslims got elected on the strength of Pandit refugee votes alone. Even then the elected candidates rarely visited the refugee camps or spent any funds out of the constituency development fund on the refugee voters, except as a symbolic gesture to derive political mileage. The reality is that nearly 350,000 Kashmiri Pandits, whose relevance to the events in the Valley cannot be questioned, have ceased to have any stake in the Valley's political process. Their displacement and lower population growth rate have ensured that their irrelevance to the political process is total and complete.

Psychological Impact

There is a universal acknowledgement of the fact that even a mere dislocation is psychologically stressful. Therefore, forced displacement is doubly so. Yet, there is virtually no debate on the problems of mental health among displaced communities. Consequently, neither its long-term implications are known nor the costs that the affected community and the society at large pay in the long run.

With the prevailing infrastructure available in the camps and low priority being given to the disease even in normal course, psychologically ill patients were almost entirely neglected. Generally, diseases related to mental health of people forced to migrate, constitute a substantial and growing burden in societies of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Middle East. Mental health disorders do not affect solely the concerned individuals, no matter how much they suffer. They affect families and communities which, in turn, are inseparable from the local, national and global process, socially and economically. Besides, one of the reasons for the long-standing neglect of neuro-psychiatric disorders is the false belief that such disease can be given a lower priority than the infectious diseases. This is possibly because of non-manifest nature of the diseases. Besides,

"cultural tradition and local forms of social relations influence the expression of neuro-psychiatric illness and psychological distress."[20] The mental disorders manifested themselves in various forms, like epilepsy, major depressive disorders, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, etc. Those least powerful, like women, children and old and infirm are definitely more vulnerable to mental disorders.

Forced exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir disrupted their social insurance mechanisms, which were present in their original habitat. Catastrophic stresses such as torture, rape and violence that Pandits suffered, created a cluster of symptoms, now known as 'Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder,' or PTSD. Unemployment and separation from family in the new environment sharply increased the risk of their mental illness. Living in cramped condition, in tented accommodation with practically no sanitation, made life miserable for the refugees. Even for those who lived with relatives or shared accommodation with others, life was a continuous struggle, which had a devastating effect on the whole generation of the community. Idleness and lack of work/vocation too had long-term adverse effects, which unbalanced even the steadiest of people. "The community had to pay a price in terms of morbidity, emotional and behavioural changes, and range of other softer psychological difficulties, which compelled them to lead a life of compromised productivity and well-being."[21]

The displaced Pandits were at a greater risk of developing depression, anxiety and 'Somatisation Disorders', besides certain other unexplained physical symptoms. They also suffered from cultural and disturbing nightmares, as the grief for those actually dead sank in. In some instances, the refugees were at greater risk of alcohol and drug use, delinquency among the youth and tendency to indulge in family violence; though in the case of Kashmir Pandits, these tendencies were not too pronounced. Displacement also provoked heightened inter-generational and gender conflicts, viz.,

between children and parents, between husband and wife. These tended to increase and not decrease with time, as adaptation to new society went forward at different rates within a family.

Notes

1. 'Leave salary' provision was applicable to only those persons who were permanent employees. Those not holding such jobs got automatically disenfranchised.
2. *Kashmir Sentinel*, May 2010, p. 9.
3. *Times of India*, April 18, 1992.
4. Ashok Kumar, the former Chief Secretary of the State, quoted by Asha Khosa in *Indian Express*, March 10, 1996.
5. *Koshur Samechar*, October 2009.
6. *Pioneer*, July 12, 2010.
7. Kanchan Gupta, *Pioneer*, September 3, 2010.
8. The origin of this temple at Bishember Nagar in Srinagar, has an interesting background. A Pandit Judge during Sikh rule, named Dharam Das Koul, was so pained by the judgement that convicted a Muslim wrongly, that he renounced the world and became a *bairagi* and established this temple. In due course, the temple grew rich because of the royal patronage that it enjoyed. Its properties included many houses, 22 acres of the sprawling Chinar Bagh behind Srinagar Golf Course, shopping complexes and buildings on Maulana Azad link-road upto Munawarabad Chowk. Today, 70 per cent of its properties have been compromised; properties on Maulana Azad link-road encroached upon/leased/sold out.
9. Lt Gen SK Sinha, former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, *Pioneer*, October 22, 2009.
10. *Statesman News Service*, Jammu, January 27, 2009.
11. *The Week*, June 19, 2011.
12. Ibid.
13. *The Migrant*, Issue 3, Vol III, March 1998.
14. Ibid.
15. Byron J Good, Ph. D., Prof of Medical Anthropology, Department of Social Medicine, Hammond Medical School.
16. *Report on the Impact of Migration on the Socio-economic Conditions of Kashmiri Displaced People;* Jammu and Kashmir Centre for Minority Studies, p. 107.
17. *The Tribune*, December 14, 2011.
18. Ibid.
19. *Hindustan Times*: April 26, 1995.
20. Byron J Good, Ph. D., n. 15.
21. Neha Pande, *Disaster and Mental Health: Organisation of Community Based Services, Marathwada Earthquake as a Case Illustration*: Presented at a workshop on Strengthening of Community Participation in Disaster Reaction and Role of NGOs, New Delhi, January 13–15, 1995.

18

RETURN AND REHABILITATION

"Each blade of grass has its spot on earth whence it draws its life,
Its strength; and so is man rooted to the land from which he draws,
His faith, together with his life." — *Joseph Conrad*

A world riven with dissension, conflict, wars, insurgency and wide economic disparities, will continue to witness mass exodus of



Photograph taken by Dr Sanjay Parva of his ancestral house at Magam, Malmoh.

people from one continent to another, from one region to another, from one country to another and within a country. All such displaced people will need to be resettled and rehabilitated, needing enormous state intervention.

Rehabilitation of a huge mass of people is a complex and difficult process even at the best of times. The rehabilitation of displaced Kashmiri Pandits is even more complicated, because their forced displacement is one of the many intractable issues that constitute 'Kashmir Problem' which has defied solution all these years. Despite insurgency having broken out in the Valley after a sufficiently long incubation period, all government departments, NGOs, self-help groups, etc. were found thoroughly ill-prepared when the whole Valley was engulfed by flames, resulting in forced exodus of almost 400,000 Kashmiri Pandits. To make matters worse, no policy existed on the rehabilitation or resettlement of the refugees. Under the circumstances, long-term rehabilitation measures must be carefully considered, planned and executed. These include; proper housing, adequate compensation for huge losses suffered by them and providing the refugees with the means of earning their livelihood. To do all this, it would be necessary to set up a statutory authority with adequate powers for resettlement and rehabilitation. Such statutory authority must have the powers to restore to the displaced people their properties, including houses, shops, commercial establishments, industries, etc., wherever these are still existing.

Their sense of alienation too will have to be addressed as part of the rehabilitation plan. This would mean ensuring their participation in their own affairs, particularly in the matters of their welfare, religious and cultural affairs, including enabling them to maintain their unique identity, etc. It would be necessary to provide institutional guarantees that will infuse reasonable degree of confidence in the community. Their economic state will have to be ameliorated at the earliest; initially at the place of their resettlement. The complexity of

this process is, indeed, a formidable task. When people get displaced, the production systems get dismantled, kinship groupings disrupted and long established residential settlements are abandoned. People's lives are affected in the most painful manner. Jobs are lost, assets destroyed, healthcare tends to deteriorate. For those in business, the links between producers and customers are often severed. Displaced Kashmiri Pandits accept that it is impossible for the government to create a habitat outside the Valley which would be an exact replica of their original habitat. But civic facilities provided to the refugees must have the basic necessities like latrines, drainage, soakage pits, roads, schools, grounds, ponds, dispensaries, drinking water source, schools, etc. Some of the other issues that need specific attention are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

One of the first tasks that the Central Government should have carried out was to assess correctly the total number of refugee families living in different parts of the vast country. But like many other issues connected with their forced exodus, this too fell a victim to political exigencies. Centre relied on the details provided by the State Government.

The number of families who have registered as refugees at Jammu, Delhi and other places outside the Jammu and Kashmir State is as under:

Jammu Division	Families
Hindus	27,282
Muslims	2,303
Sikhs	1,830
Others	75
Total	31,490 (1)
Delhi	19,339
Himachal Pradesh	115

Haryana	523
Chandigarh	206
Punjab	100
Uttar Pradesh Committee	500
Madhya Pradesh	40
Karnataka	60
Goa	140
Kerala	5
Maharashtra	124
Rajasthan	47
Total	21,199 (2)

Grand Total: 1+2= 52,689 families comprising of estimated 125,000 people.

The district-wise break-up of families and people who have not migrated and continue to stay in the Valley is given hereunder:

District	Families	No of Persons
Srinagar	557	2,228
Budgam	112	425
Baramulla	313	1,404
Kupwara	16	64
Anantnag	419	1,859
Pulwama	318	1,543
Total	1,735	7,523

Source: *Report on the Impact of Migration on the Socio-economic Conditions of Kashmiri Displaced People;* Jammu and Kashmir Centre for Minority Studies. Figures obtained from the State Government.

Economy and Employment

The refugees living in the camps and those whose main occupation was agriculture before their exodus are indigent. In most cases they

are dependent on the meager amount of monthly relief they receive from the government. With 56 per cent households in the camps being jobless or dependent on others, a large number of adults are without any gainful employment. In the absence of availability of any capital to start a venture, their condition is hopeless. It is, therefore, important that the government provide loans to such unemployed persons on easy terms; in case the government's financial institutions cannot provide such loans without accepting collateral, then such provision should be allowed to be met by the loanees by mortgaging their properties left behind by them in Kashmir. A special recruitment drive could be carried out by the government/semi-government agencies to recruit people from the refugee camps. Even the private sector should be persuaded to launch schemes to enhance various skill levels of the qualified young people in these camps, who should subsequently, be absorbed by the same sector in different jobs. State government had stated that it is committed to providing one job per family of those Pandits who were still living in the Valley. However, this promise was never met.

Every effort must be made to address the adverse effects of exodus on the displaced Pandits. People who need immediate economic assistance are the ones who live in camps and those who belong to lower economic strata. These people must be provided with larger relief package to enable them to cope with the high cost of living. It would be prudent to launch a special fund for economic reconstruction with an initial corpus of ₹ 1,000 crores for the refugees, or whatever amount an expert committee, constituted for the purpose, suggests.

Social security for the old and infirm among the displaced people is need of the hour as these people have been rendered most vulnerable to serious health effects as a result of the forced displacement. Due to the break-up of the joint family system and significant drop in the population growth, old and infirm will continue to face the

brunt of the consequences of exodus. It would be necessary for the government to modify the old-age pension scheme which already exists, for such destitute and helpless people.

For a community as small as Kashmiri Pandits, Parliament should include them in the 'reservation schedule' so that reservations are extended to them in the same manner as other disadvantaged sections of the society.

Housing and Property

The present arrangements of housing that exist in the camps are grossly inadequate and unhygienic. The one-room tenements, numbering roughly 4,500 need immediate augmentation. It is important that same number of two-room tenements be constructed immediately to ease the problem. The government has undertaken this type of scheme at Jagti, near Jammu. About a year back, the Prime Minister handed over some of these two-room tenements to some refugees — the first among those who was allotted this accommodation was the sole survivor of Wandhama massacre. However, the civic amenities existing in the township are almost non-existent. There are practically no healthcare facilities available anywhere close by. "The situation is so bad that nearly 160 refugees died within two months of their moving into the township,"[1] says Dr Khema Kaul, an activist of Panun Kashmir. Similarly, house-rent allowance must be made applicable to those living on rent after working out the criteria of eligibility for receiving the same. In addition, it would be worthwhile to assess the number of houses belonging to the refugees in both rural and urban areas of Kashmir, which still exist and have not, as yet, been sold. To prevent their distress sale, it is necessary that these houses and other similar properties should be taken over by the government and put to some productive use. Income generated thereby could be used for the welfare of the displaced people. Again, for managing this whole

process of enumerating, assessing and evaluating the worth of such properties, a statutory body needs to be created, whose writ will have a legal sanction. The existing law that is meant to prevent distress sale has proved woefully inadequate to achieve its intended purpose.

Making the Community Politically Relevant

Today, Kashmiri Pandits stand completely disenfranchised. In a democracy, no deprivation is worse than this fate. Public purpose, as widely understood, gives primacy to the interests of the public as opposed to the interest of an individual. However, in actual fact, more often than not, the public interests are determined by those groups/communities/vested interests, which are economically strong and politically dominant. As the amorphousness of the term is open to subjective interpretation, it is evident that smaller communities like Kashmiri Pandits, are likely to get increasingly marginalised, politically. Besides, with numerous alternatives being discussed to grant greater autonomy to the State and consequently to Jammu and Ladakh, it is quite on the cards, that Kashmiri Pandits will be left high and dry.

An overwhelming number of Pandit refugees feel that the only way they can retain their relevance to political process in Kashmir is to create two constituencies in exile. This alone can give them a voice. At the same time, taking into consideration their peculiar circumstances, the Election Commission of India should, in consultation with the State Government, have one seat reserved for Pandits in the State Legislative Council. At the same time; all displaced Kashmiri Pandits must be enrolled as voters in their respective constituencies, of which they were *bonafide* voters in the Valley before exodus. This would go a long way in helping them attain some degree of political relevance. Presently, there is no consensus on the exact number of displaced Kashmiri Pandits living outside the valley. The census authorities can assess this figure on the basis of the State Subject Certificate held by

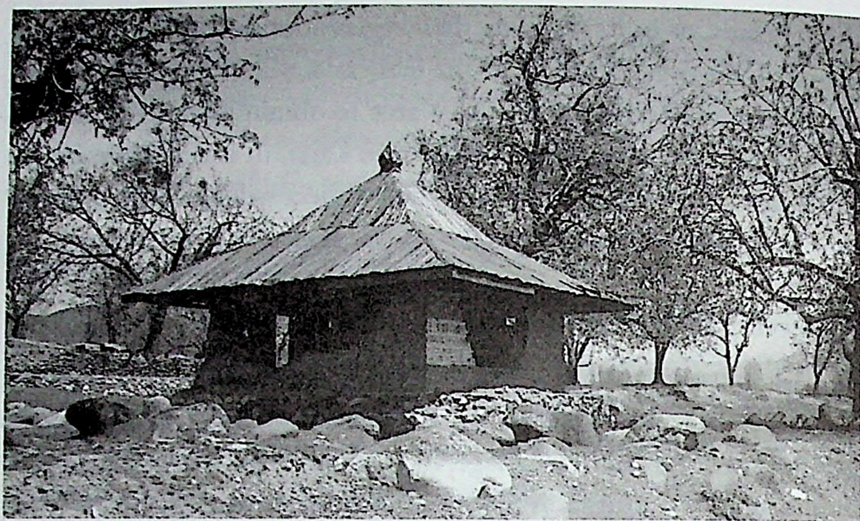
the refugees, or in its absence, their registration record, as displaced people. This must be done at the earliest as the next generation of the displaced Pandits has not been able to obtain this certificate due to the disturbed conditions in Kashmir. Later, in the absence of this certificate, their claims of being a state subject will be contested, and they will have no credible proof to prove their Kashmiri descent.

Preserving its Distinct Identity

The most important factor that will contribute towards enabling the Kashmiri Pandit community to preserve its distinct identity is the promotion of Kashmiri language. Its original script, 'Sharda' has fallen into disuse for centuries. Majority of the community, particularly the younger generation, are not familiar with the Persian-Arabic script that Kashmiri Muslims use to write in Kashmiri. Therefore, it is only Devnagri script which can fill this vacuum. Its applicability could be restricted to Kashmiri Pandits alone, in case government finds it politically inexpedient to apply it to whole Valley.

The Kashmiri Pandits' religious places are mismanaged and under serious threat of being gobbled up by unscrupulous elements. These need to be protected by handing over their management to a statutory body, on the lines of 'Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Trust', at the earliest. Representation of community members on the board of such Trust must not be less than 50 per cent. Rough estimates suggest that hundreds of crores of rupees are held by various trusts which manage these religious places at present. Besides, land and estates, which form a substantial part of these trusts, too needs to be accounted for. Efficient and well-regulated management alone can ensure that locked-up capital is released to be used for the betterment of the community at large.

With some improvement in ground situation in the Valley over the last few years, an ever-increasing number of the displaced Pandit community have been visiting Kashmir regularly, with many



An abandoned Hindu temple lying in disuse on the banks of Kahmil

of them extending their stay for longer duration. In the last five years, a large number of Pandit religious places and those associated with their sages and saints have been repaired and restored to their original shape by Pandit organisations, with the active help of locals. This activity is bound to get a fillip if violence in the Valley is kept at bay and peace is given a chance. Such measures will go a long way in helping Pandits keep their religious and socio-cultural practices alive. Spending longer periods of time in Kashmir, keeping their traditions alive in Kashmir and taking care of their centuries-old temples and places associated with their history, will go a long way in helping Pandits preserve their unique identity as a distinct ethnic group.

Notes

1. *Panun Kashmir* is a political movement launched by a faction of displaced Kashmiri Pandits, demanding a separate enclave within Kashmir, having a Union Territory status. This statement was made by Dr Khema Kaul in a seminar held on November 27, 2011, at Noida, a township in the National Capital Region.

19

CRITICAL ISSUES





"The golden rule in a democracy is that it is the duty of the majority to protect the minority, be it religious, racial or linguistic. It is a self-evident rule... Firmly rooted in the universality of human rights." —*PC Chidambaram (November 8, 2009)*

(Indian Home Minister in his speech to a convention hosted by Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband)

Was Violence Against Kashmir Pandits a Genocide?

By definition, genocide is, '*the killing of one hundred or more members of an ethnic, racial, linguistic or a religious group*.' The UNO

has declared genocide as a crime under International Law through a resolution passed by the UN General Assembly on December 11, 1946. Consequently, a Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide came into effect on January 12, 1951. The targeted killing of Kashmiri Pandits from September 1989, onwards, till the entire ethnic community was almost entirely cleansed out of the Valley, clearly fits into the definition of genocide. If the complete data of the killings were to be compiled, the list would run into thousands. Among the dead were those reported missing, or those whose dead bodies were disposed off by the government agencies as unclaimed.

According to the fact-sheet presented to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) by the State of Jammu and Kashmir, 719 Hindus had been killed. The report states, "Due to the targeted attacks by the militants against the innocent civilians in the early years of the ongoing militancy in Jammu and Kashmir, coupled with calls by Islamist terrorist groups to Kashmiri Pandits to leave the Valley, the vast majority of them and other minority communities were forced to migrate." The report further states that 43,364 Hindu families went to Jammu until 1991 and 28,713 to Delhi. Informing about the destruction of religious places, the report states that 97 temples were destroyed by militants till the end of 1994. For a community numbering less than half a million prior to their exodus in December 1989, having over 700 of its members killed from the fall of 1989 up till the summer of 1990, was indeed a heavy toll.

The basic human rights of Pandits, as of every other Indian, are guaranteed by Indian Constitution and the provisions of International Law. These provisions were clearly violated and their abuse should have straightway attracted the invoking of such provisions to defend the basic human rights of Kashmiri Pandits. For getting justice under such provisions, they did not have to belong

to a minority community. It was only because Indian Government and international organisations turned a blind eye to their plight, that they (Pandits) had to present their case in front of the NHRC. Various Kashmiri Pandit organisations presented a comprehensive case, in which they pleaded with the NHRC to declare the events preceding the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, and those that continued till much after they had evacuated the Valley, as 'genocide', as defined by the International Convention, to which India is a signatory.

In order to preserve its secular façade, the political establishment sacrificed the Kashmiri Pandits at the altar of political expediency and vote-bank politics. Truth became a casualty and Pandits once again became the victims of unjust and unjustified stand taken by the State and Central governments. Nevertheless, it is apparent from the stand taken by the NHRC that they were hard put to justify their eventual stand as they appeared to have been convinced of the Pandits' argument that genocide did actually take place. The NHRC resorted to the jugglery of semantics and played with the words to conclude that 'genocide-type of situation had got created'. Actually, what they said was this, "Killing and 'ethnic cleansing' of Kashmiri Pandits must be seen in the deeper intent to secure the secession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The crimes committed against the Kashmiri Pandits are, by any yardstick, deserving of the strongest condemnations... but against the stern definition of the 'Genocide Convention'; the Commission is constrained to observe that while acts akin to genocide have occurred in respect of Kashmiri Pandits, and that, indeed, in the minds and utterances of some of the militants, genocide type design may exist... the crimes, grave as they undoubtedly are, fall short of ultimate crime of genocide." (NHRC Case No. 938/94–95 7 1181/94–95, 11 June 1999).

Leave alone calling it a genocide, the Government of India has shied away from calling it even an ethnic cleansing, which it certainly

was. As Vir Sanghvi, the Editor-in-Chief of a leading national daily, *The Hindustan Times*, writes, "Hundreds of thousands of Pandits fled because they feared for their lives. There is a term for this sort of thing even though we, in India, are reluctant to use it: ethnic cleansing." He further adds, "Whenever ethnic cleansing has occurred over the last few decades in Eastern Europe for instance, the world has sat up and taken notice. The United Nations has got involved. The world press has treated it as a global story and Western governments have tried to find solutions. Except that in the case of the Pandits, nothing has happened. Nobody seems to care."[1]

Internally Displaced People (IDP) Status

People becoming internally displaced is a recent phenomenon. The situation has been brought about by many internal armed conflicts taking place in many countries. Whereas the rules governing the treatment of trans-border displacements are adequately covered by various conventions on refugees, the IDPs enjoy no such protection. As no legally binding instrument guarantees protection or assistance to them, they remain the most vulnerable sections among forced refugees. Though at present there are over 23 million 'official' refugees in world due to various reasons, this does not include the IDPs. What is even worse, it is the weakest and the poorest who suffer the most among them, when they are forcibly displaced from their usual habitat and places of residence, either due to conflicts or natural disasters. Being refugees within their own country, it is the country's own specific laws that become applicable to them. Those displacements, which occur as a result of armed conflicts, attract provisions of Article 3 and additional Protocol II of Geneva Conventions, which lays down the Principles of Treatment of civilians fleeing, as a result. It also includes the Provision and care of the sick and the wounded, the women and the children. Guiding principles on internal displacement lay down specific rights of IDPs,

so far as their rights of protection and humanitarian assistance and the obligations of the governments during displacement are concerned. But in reality, it only serves as a framework, because the provisions are not legally binding. In India, the problem of IDPs becomes grave as the country does not recognise IDPs and, therefore, applies no legal provision to ameliorate their lot.

Some Kashmiri Pandit organisations had requested the NHRC to declare the displaced Pandits as 'Internally Displaced Persons' as per the International Conventions and usage. Central Government contested the claim on the ground that it does not recognise IDPs, and that the exodus took place essentially because of terrorist actions, abetted by Pakistan, to secure secession of Jammu and Kashmir from the Union of India. Besides, the Government of India declared that 'Kashmiri Pandits needed only rehabilitation and the laws of the land were adequate to take care of that and the solution was required to be found at the political level. Based on these arguments, the NHRC neither intervened nor gave any relief. The Commission, though, empathised with the Kashmiri Pandits and felt that the community was not getting the degree of relief that it deserved. But, beyond that, there was nothing much it could do. Hypocrisy and the dishonesty of the Government were quite clear from the contents of its letter dated May 6, 1996 (Case No 802 on NHRC file):

"...The complainants are appropriately styled as refugees as they have migrated on their own from areas in the Valley to Jammu area of the same State or other areas of the country. Their claims to designate them as internally displaced persons are not acceptable to the Government of India on the ground that displacement was self imposed."

It could be argued that Kashmir problem has defied a lasting solution for the last over six decades and is unlikely to be resolved any time soon. Does it mean that in the absence of any political

solution, Kashmiri Pandits' rights should be trampled just because they are too few in number?

By all accounts, Kashmiri Pandit community is an internally displaced community and it expected the Central Government to declare them as such. But the Government of India took shelter behind some vague rules which do not permit it to declare even forcibly displaced people as IDPs. To add insult to their injury, the Government took the stand that Kashmiri Pandits had left the valley of their 'own accord', as if they had decided to go for a picnic at the height of winter in temperatures below freezing point, leaving everything behind! It is a matter of abiding shame for the government to have sacrificed the whole community at the altar of political expediency.

Compared to the hypocritical Indian attitude towards the displaced Kashmiri Pandit community, the US was more sympathetic to it. Frank Pallone, the US Congressman introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives on February 15, 2006, condemning the violation of human rights of Kashmiri Pandits. He categorically stated that Jehadis were indulging in ethnic cleansing of the Valley to turn it into an Islamic state and 400,000 Kashmiri Pandits, many of whom were murdered, were displaced from their homes. The resolution stated that the House condemned the human rights violations of Kashmiri Pandits in the strongest terms. The House conveyed its sense by stating that the Government of India and the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir should take immediate steps to remedy the situation and act to ensure the physical, political and economic security of the embattled community.

Even the term, 'Refugee' has recently been re-defined by the State Government with ulterior motives. The Prime Minister had, as part of a package for the State, announced certain measures for the rehabilitation of the refugees (displaced Kashmiri Pandits). As per

the original notification a 'refugee' implied a person who had moved out of the Valley after November 1, 1989, and had been registered as such. However, according to the new notification, a 'refugee' will now be IDPs also, i.e., people who moved from one place to another within the Valley. This amendment has been incorporated to deprive genuine Kashmiri Pandit 'refugees' (actually refugees, but labeled as 'migrants' due to political exigencies) from the benefits announced by the Prime Minister, and at the same time, benefit Kashmiri Muslims. The Pandits left the Valley over twenty years ago, and it is only the Muslims who have and continue to move from one place to another, within the Valley. It may be mentioned that all Kashmiri Pandits applying for jobs under the Prime Minister's package for refugees, had given an undertaking as required by the notice issued by the Services Selection Board of the State that 'they will serve in Kashmir Valley alone'. This was a ploy to dissuade the Pandit refugees from applying for such jobs.

Kashmiri Pandits recently saw a ray of hope in the judgement delivered by the Honourable Justice of Delhi High Court, Justice Gita Mittal, in the case relating to the petition filed by PK Kaul and others, versus Delhi Estate Officer, who had issued eviction orders to refugee Kashmiri Pandit employees. While delivering a significant judgement, Justice Mittal held the 'Kashmiri refugees as IDPs.' She based her verdict on a number of existing guidelines and principles governing internal displacement, as also various judgements delivered by the Supreme Court of India.

Articulating the aspirations of the Kashmiri Pandit refugees, the All India Kashmiri Samaj, an apex body of all Kashmiri Pandit Organisations, during its Global Meet held in Jammu on March 4, 2012, passed a resolution on this important issue. It stated, "Guidelines set-forth by the working group on internally displaced people at the United Nations Human Rights Council, shall have to be accepted as fundamental to their restitution in the Valley. At least

four out of the 'Compendium of Fundamentals' are of vital interests to us. These are: non-refoulment, concentrated and comprehensive living, recognition of specific identity and empowering them politically with viable means of sustenance."

Minority Status

Whereas at the all-India level there is a statutory provision that empowers the Centre to declare certain sections of the society as 'minorities,' which entitles them to crucial benefits, the same does not apply to minorities within a state. In the Indian context, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis have been recognised as minorities by the National Commission of Minorities Act, 1992. This Act does not lay down any well-defined principles to identify a minority. This was, perhaps, deliberately intended to be so, as there was always a danger of any distinct ethnic/religious group demanding a minority status. With huge diversity, there are numerous such groups who have a distinct ethno-cultural identity of their own, which can safely classify these groups as a minority. As per the census of 1991, minorities, as defined by this Act constitute 17.5 per cent of the country's population. Nevertheless the rigidity of interpretation ensured that Pandits could not claim any minority status.

Under the Indian Constitution, states enjoy all the requisite powers to re-categorise minorities to cater for their local needs. For example, in Jammu and Kashmir, Muslims, obviously, are not a minority. But at the same time Kashmiri Pandits cannot be declared a minority, as the State government has not enacted any law to that effect, despite having all the powers to do so. Despite being a microscopic minority, Kashmiri Pandits enjoy no special consideration as such. This has been commented upon by no less than the Chairman of National Commission for Minorities (NCM), Wajahat Habibullah, who said, "The declaration of Kashmiri Pandits as a minority in

Jammu and Kashmir was a 'crying need of the hour' and he would actively pursue the matter with the State Government."[2] Expressing helplessness in the matter, the Chairman further added, "The writ of the National Commission for Minorities does not run in Jammu and Kashmir because it enjoys a special status. But we have come across several cases of suffering involving the families of Kashmiri Pandits, who chose to stay back in the Valley, despite repeated threats from terrorists. Not much is being done for these families and their wards. It's time the State Government notified Kashmiri Hindus as a minority in Jammu and Kashmir. They must pass their own Act, set up their own minority commission and re-categorise the minorities, depending on the actual population in the state."[3]

Though the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, vide its Article 27, recognises minority rights, it does not define it in definitive terms. Besides, due to political expediency, the governments may deny the existence of minorities altogether, in order to avoid its applicability.

Return of Pandits to Kashmir

Return of Kashmiri Pandits to the Valley is the biggest challenge to the very idea of India as a multi-ethnic, plural and secular democracy. Therefore, restoration of that position must remain India's ultimate aim in Kashmir.

Displaced people have a right to return to their native places. According to UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the provisions of the Indian Constitution, it is the responsibility of the Government of India to create conducive conditions for Pandits to return safely and honourably to their habitual place of residence. UN Guideline 28 is quite categorical on this issue. It states, "Competent authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to establish conditions, as well as provide means, which allow internally

displaced persons to return voluntarily to their homes or places of habitual residence." This involves the following:

1. Guaranteeing their safety and security.
2. Protecting their 'Fundamental Rights' as enshrined in the Constitution of India and honouring the same as universally accepted.
3. Unhindered freedom of movement.
4. Protecting their inalienable right to livelihood with dignity and honour.
5. Providing adequate opportunity to enable them to participate in the affairs of their community.
6. Must have a guaranteed right to be consulted in the matters that concern the welfare, identity, religious freedom and cultural well-being of their own community.
7. Adopting such measures which would reinforce their sense of belonging as a necessary pre-condition for their re-integration into the Valley's social milieu.
8. Their economic well-being will have to be ensured through a mechanism that will ensure their economic rehabilitation at their usual place of residence, or at a mutually acceptable place. Following must form part of economic package:
    - Loss of property must be completely compensated.
    - Availability of generous loans on low interests for rebuilding their houses and restarting their businesses.
    - Provision of relief for loss of agricultural assets.

It is generally accepted that people displaced as a result of wars, conflicts or other natural calamities, be able to return to their homeland, once the turbulence has subsided. But this is contingent upon the fact that normalcy has been restored. In the case of Kashmiri

Pandits, the moot point is whether the desired level of normalcy has been restored or not?

Kashmiri Pandits, particularly those living in camps, yearn to return to the Valley. They are overwhelmingly nostalgic while expressing their desire to return to their roots in Kashmir. In a survey conducted among displaced Pandits in 2005, to assess the pre-conditions of their return to Kashmir; security emerged as the overriding consideration, followed by their desire to have a secure area in the Valley, to settle in, preferably enjoying Union Territory status. These preferences were, in turn, followed by a need to be provided with social security, complete economic rehabilitation and reservation in jobs; the last being the choice of those displaced from rural areas of Kashmir. Many linked their return to the Valley with the necessity of their being politically empowered as a pre-condition. Therefore, the essentials pre-requisites that must be available to the displaced Pandits on return are; ability of Kashmiri Pandits to protect, promote and live according to their cultural traditions; be able to live without fear, without being discriminated against by the state or the Muslim majority population of the valley; be able to live in a secure environment that guarantees right to life and property of each individual; enjoy all democratic rights in accordance with the provisions of the Indian Constitution.

Having been deprived of any role in political decision-making, Pandits' alienation from the mainstream has been complete. As a matter of fact, they played no role even in deciding issues that greatly impacted their own community. This will have to be rectified if Pandits are to live in Kashmir with dignity and honour. That will be possible if a statutory body is created to oversee the rehabilitation of Pandits in the Valley and provide them with constitutional safeguards so that they are not pushed out again in future. As Dr Ajay Chrungoo, President 'Panun Kashmir', said, "Pandits'

return to the Valley needs a new constitutional dispensation with ingredients which will retain them in the Valley on lasting basis."[4]

On a few occasions in the past, the state government has shown some urgency in dealing with the issue of return of Pandits to Kashmir. In November, 1997, it stated, "The matter of safe return of refugees to their native places in the Valley is of top most priority for the State Government... the State Government had constituted a sub-committee headed by Financial Commissioner (Planning and Development) to draw up an action plan... which was submitted in July 97." As a consequence, a group of refugees visited the Valley to interact with their neighbours to renew their old contacts. In 1997, an Act called the "J&K Kashmiri Refugees Immoveable Properties (Preservation, Protection and Restraint of Distress Sale - 1997) was passed. Later, the same year, another Act, called the Jammu and Kashmir Refugees (Stay Proceedings) Act, 1997, was also passed. In 1999, it was envisaged that 2,000 families could be moved into 15 clusters of 166 homes still intact in the Valley, where security was available. An amount of ₹ 44 crores was made available for this purpose. However, families refused to return for various reasons. In August 2002, a statement made in the Rajya Sabha said, "...The return to the Valley with honour and dignity is one of the top most priorities of the State Government." The last attempt made by the Mufti's Government in 2003, envisaging settling the refugees in Mattan and Tullamulla, in two more clusters, was put paid to due to Nandimarg massacre.

Events in Kashmir since 2000, when conditions in the Valley started improving, have not induced much confidence among the displaced Pandits. Whenever serious steps were afoot to rehabilitate the Pandits in the Valley, the militants struck with great ferocity, killing Hindus and Sikhs to convey their opposition to the proposal. In the process, many innocent men, women and children were killed. It has

been Pandits' experience that whenever there is a talk of their likely to return to the Valley, there is invariably a violent event that targets the remaining few Kashmiri Pandits, who still continue to live there, sending a chilling message to those who are contemplating such a return. During Mufti Mohammad Syed's rule, when loud-thinking about the return of Pandits could be heard in the corridors of power (coupled with the construction of clusters of flats in Budgam, etc.), Nandimarg massacre took place in the dead of night (2.30 A.M.) on March, 24, 2003, in which 24 Kashmiri Pandits, including 11 men, 11 women and 2 children were brutally murdered. The murders were committed to deter Pandits from returning to Kashmir and send a message to those persuading the Pandits to return. This put an end to any talk about Pandit's return, at least for the time being.

The diffidence of the Pandits to return to the Valley on account of their security concerns can be gauged from the fact that despite a reasonably attractive package announced by the State government in its budget proposal in 2009, only 300 families expressed their willingness. This was in addition to 934 families that had registered themselves for their return in 2008, after the Prime Minister had announced a similar package. This forms just two per cent of the total number of registered displaced families (55,476). It is not a random killing due to a stray grenade attack on security forces or being an unintended victim of cross-firing, etc., that scares the Pandits. It is the fear of being the targets of well-planned massacres, like Wandhama, Chhitisingpora and Nandimarg, that scares them and justifiably so.

Events of 2008 and 2010 in Kashmir further shattered the Pandits' confidence in the ability of the government to provide them with adequate security on their return to the Valley. Mass agitations launched by separatists on Amarnath land transfer issue in 2008, and orchestrated stone-pelting that paralysed the entire Valley during

the summer of 2010, was a serious setback to the cherished desire of those Pandits who wanted to return to Kashmir. These agitations, spearheaded by separatists, attracted huge participation, indicating the ability of these militant leaders to whip up mass hysteria, which the vested interests can easily turn against the Pandits.

Sometime back the State government's formulation of a 'Surrender Policy' for the militants further eroded the confidence of the Pandits regarding the intentions of the government. The policy was aimed at allowing those Kashmiri youth who had crossed over to Pakistan/PoK to return to the Valley and rehabilitate them. There are nearly 800 of them in the militant camps and many of them have married the local girls, whose children are now Pakistani citizens. That such people can pose a serious threat to Pandits was totally overlooked and did little to instill confidence in the latter. This sinister policy has created great apprehensions in the minds of Pandits who suffered at their hands.

Rehabilitation of Pandits in the Valley is itself going to be a nightmare for the State administration. A large number of houses belonging to the community have been burnt/destroyed, and out of the remaining, about 80 per cent houses have been sold out as part of distress sale. The remaining 20 per cent have been occupied by security forces on rental basis. Getting these premises vacated is proving a herculean task. One wonders whether any thought has been given to this aspect. Till permanent arrangements for their rehabilitation in the Valley are made, there would be a need for huge transit accommodation. Besides, it will need careful planning on many fronts; creating means of earning a livelihood, housing, adequate compensation for losses suffered; return of houses, factories, orchards, lands, etc., wherever these are still in functional order. To encourage the refugee youth to return to the Valley, the private sector should be encouraged to employ them by opening up its outlets in Kashmir.

One of the biggest obstacles to the return of Pandits is going to be their re-integration into the social milieu of the Valley. A complete generation has grown up in the Valley without ever having interacted with Pandits. This has robbed the Kashmiri society of a chance to live in an environment where there are 'others' besides Muslims. For Kashmiri Pandits it will be easier to fit into a purely Muslim dominated social milieu, but it will be next to impossible for the younger generation of Valley Muslims to share social space based on interaction with non-Muslims. This is further made worse by the fact that during this period, the fundamentalist Muslim preachers, namely Salafists, Wahabis and their ilk, have brainwashed the entire generation into adopting a more intolerant stance towards Kashmiri Pandits. The following examples will suffice:

A slogan has recently been coined to describe the return to the Valley of some women employees who were given jobs as part of the Prime Minister's relief package. One of the pre-conditions laid down by the state government before issuing appointment letters to these women employees was that they would have to serve in the Valley itself. The slogan goes something like this:

'Bud budani rooze tapas, yazzat soozukh vaạpas'

(The old men and women preferred to stay in the scorching sun,
but they chose to send their honour back to the Valley)

While playing marbles, the Kashmiri Muslim children name the targeted marble as *Bhatta*, (Kashmiri Pandit).

Kashmiri Pandits have further been discouraged from contemplating return to the Valley because of the step-motherly treatment meted out by the State government to those Kashmiri Pandits who are still left behind in the valley. Their sad plight was very much evident when the NCM visited the Valley recently. According to NCM, there were 3,700 Kashmir Pandit families in the Valley in

March 2011. During their interaction with the beleaguered Pandits, they found that they had been left to the wolves, with no one in the government sparing any thought for them. Seeing their pathetic condition the NCM noted, "that the State Government was not doing enough for the welfare of Kashmiri Pandits left behind in the Valley. They were found to be even worse off than the refugee Kashmiri Pandits, who have better access to employment and educational opportunities outside the State." Seeing their condition, Chairman of the NCM was moved to say "I have met several Kashmiri Hindu families, which stayed back in the Valley. Today, their wards barely have access to jobs, while those of the refugee Kashmiri Pandits are much better placed because they had moved out and managed a better education, besides the benefits of the state schemes for the Kashmiri refugees. Those who stayed back are now regretting not having migrated. Their children curse them for having stayed on. The State Government must provide for them."[5]

The reaction of Muslim separatists in Kashmir to the idea of Pandits' return has ranged from ambivalence to outright hostility. Though some of them have refused to take a clear-cut stand, others have, on occasions, expressed their view on the issue openly. In an interview given to Murtaza Saibili, a correspondent of *Surya* magazine (June 1993 issue), most separatist leaders, ranging from Syed Ali Shah Geelani on the one extreme to Miyan Abdul Qayoom, President of Kashmir Bar Association, on the other, accepted the possibility of the return of Kashmiri Pandits only on the pre-condition that Pandits will have to participate in the ongoing struggle in favour of Islamic Liberation.

The militant organisations have openly opposed the return of Pandits to the 'Islamic Kashmir'. Nearly 17 years after the above interviews were conducted; their stand has shown little softening-up. In a recent television debate on 'Return of Kashmiri Pandits', Sajjad Lone, Chairman of People's Conference, an important part of

All Party Hurriyat Conference, and a well-known separatist leader said,"Some Kashmiri Pandits are overqualified to return." It is clear from his statement that all Pandit refugees are not welcome back. A few years back, when PDP was ruling the state, its top leader, Mehbooba Mufti had also stated that only those Pandits, who lived in refugee camps, were the government's responsibility. It is clear from the above statements that since all the property and lands left behind by Pandits in Kashmir had been usurped by Muslims, bulk of Pandits, therefore, were not welcome back to the Valley, to claim the same. Such a hostile attitude of important Kashmiri leaders towards the return of Pandits, sends a negative message to the frightened community.

The fact is that various stakeholders in the ongoing insurgency have their own reasons to oppose Pandits' return to Kashmir. The armed militants oppose it on ideological grounds; the separatists for political reasons; the general masses oppose it for purely economic reasons. Muslim masses in Kashmir have benefited enormously from the Pandit exodus. They have monopolised all the jobs, appropriated all businesses, occupied abandoned properties, either forcibly or by purchasing these at throwaway prices in distress sale, etc. Thousands of government jobs have gone to the local Muslims as no Pandit has been recruited to fill in the vacancy created by the retirement of their co-religionists. The Muslim educated class has seen the clear advantage that Pandits' exodus and their continued displacement out of the Valley, gave them. They have naturally developed a stake in preserving the status-quo. Muslim middle class will, therefore, consider it a threat to their economic interests, if the Pandits were to return. In the face of such stiff opposition to Pandit's return, mainstream political parties have been cold to the proposal. Besides, Kashmiri Pandits's return has occupied only the margins of political debate in the country. Except the Bharatiya Janata Party (when out of power) no one has sincerely taken up the cause of this beleaguered community. The plight of

Kashmiri Pandits has got masked by the 'secular versus communal' debate, often witnessed in the Indian polity. Being too few in number, Pandits themselves do not represent a monolithic vote-bank and therefore, are not taken seriously by any political party.

In the final analysis, a microscopic minority like Kashmiri Pandits can live safely and with dignity only if respondent Muslim majority so desires, and to this end, is able to convince its radical fringe. This will largely depend upon the degree to which majority community is willing to accommodate the political and economic aspirations of this microscopic community. As of today, it does not appear to be in any mood to do so. This is evident from the reaction to the last Assembly elections to the State Legislature held after the Congress-PDP coalition government had to resign, as a consequence of the Amarnath land row. When reminded by a senior journalist about the overwhelming response of Kashmiris to the elections, Syed Ali Shah Geelani said tersely, "Kufr has won and Islam has lost."

Similarly, even at the common man's level, some incidents, like the one that took place at Chhatabal, do not inspire confidence. While collecting evidence of the dilapidated state of temples of the Valley, Sanjay Tickoo, President of Kashmiri Pandit Sangharsh Samiti (KPSS), and his colleagues just about managed to escape with their lives, when local youth attacked them for daring to record the evidence. Describing the incident, Tickoo said, "It was 386th temple which we wanted to document through pictures for restoring it. But five-six members from the majority community came and threatened us," Tickoo told the *Hindustan Times*. Tickoo is further reported to have said, "these men used words like *"Jis tarah humne tumhare mandiroon ko jalaya hai vaise hi tum logon ko jalayenge, aur kisi ko pata bi nahi chalega* (The way we have burnt your temples, in the same way we will burn you and no one will know about you). *Yehan sirf Islam Chalega* (Only Islam will prevail here). *India ko lagta*

hai ki tum logon ko vapas layega, jo bi aayega mara jayega, hum log phir se gun uthayenge (India thinks they can bring Kashmiri Pandits back to Valley. Whosoever will come, will die. We will again take up arms against you)." Tickoo said the locals manhandled the members of the KPSS. "We had to leave the place. The villagers who had gathered at the spot did not intervene. This shows that the attitude towards the minority community has not changed."[6&7]

Many Pandits think that their return to Kashmir can only be a part of an overall and comprehensive settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir problem, wherein all parties to the dispute will have to guarantee their safety, security and dignity. Today, the situation is such that return is not even talked about by the Pandits because of both internal and external factors, which have firmly sucked the Valley into the vortex of Islamic terrorism. Activities of Pakistan-created and sponsored terror groups is not just confined to the Valley, but have also spread to many other parts of the country. Despite West's consensus on war on terror and the pooling of resources by many countries to end this scourge, there is no end in sight to this menace. In fact, Pakistan itself has now fallen prey to this endless and senseless violence at the hands of radical elements, which it created in first place. Large parts of Pakistan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Waziristan, etc., are today completely under the sway of various Islamic terror groups. Kashmir will, therefore, continue to simmer, despite the fact that India-Pakistan composite dialogue has been on and off and on again, for some years now.

In the meanwhile, Pakistani society too has got extremely radicalised. This is evident from people eulogising the assassin of Salman Taseer, the Governor of Punjab and a top politician of Pakistan People's Party, who had supported the amending of the draconian anti-blasphemy law. Sometime later, killing of the only Christian Minister in the Federal Cabinet, Shahzad Bhatti, for the same reason, further confirmed this trend. At the popular level in

Pakistan, there is extensive support for waging of Jehad in Kashmir, if not in the whole of India. According to a poll conducted by a Pakistan News Magazine, *Herald*, in January 2002, 64 per cent supported it. Besides, most of the people do not consider Kashmir to be a territorial dispute, but a Hindu-Muslim issue, in which their sympathies are with Muslims of Kashmir in 'their struggle for separation from India and accession to Pakistan'. Kashmiri Pandits' return is, therefore, also linked to the end of Islamist violence.

India's challenge lies in its need to maintain and defend democratic pluralism, the bedrock of its much acclaimed liberal and secular constitution. Kashmir is central to this concept. India feels that armed insurgency in Kashmir is sponsored from Pakistan and it has helped the separatist movement primarily because of the Muslim-majority character of the state. The present government at the Centre in India feels Kashmiri Muslims have themselves fallen victims to this violence and if somehow this sponsorship of violence and terror were to stop, Kashmir could once again return to the peaceful ways of the old, wherein the problem could then be resolved with a heavy dose of autonomy/self-rule. This view, though simplistic, does have some merit. Composite dialogue between India and Pakistan seems to be revolving around this thinking (presently suspended due to terror strike on Mumbai by Pakistan based LeT on November 26, 2008).

According to the Pandits, they fled the Valley because of an overwhelming sense of insecurity that engulfed the community in 1989–90, as a result of the Pakistan sponsored insurgency in Kashmir. Therefore, they can return only if in their opinion, the place becomes safe enough for them to return. This will be possible only when threat of Pakistan's intervention disappears completely and peace returns. There appears to be no possibility of that happening any time soon. Pakistan is unlikely to back off its chosen path to grab Kashmir by infiltrating its well-armed and well-trained Jehadis into Kashmir.

"Since 1990, Indian army has recovered over 80,000 AK series rifles; over 1,300 machine guns; over 2,000 rocket launchers; some 63,000 hand grenades and seven million rounds of ammunition. The Indian Army has also eliminated over 20,000 terrorists, a large proportion of whom were foreign terrorists." Despite paying such huge costs, the entire Pakistani terror infrastructure is intact and thriving. There are some 2,000 to 2,500 terrorists in training camps. Some 700–850 are on the launching pads and holding camps near the LoC. Around 230 terrorists made 35 attempts to infiltrate this year (2011). Nearly 50 terrorists have been killed in 2011 so far, 19 in the last two months alone."[8] Under the circumstances, generally peaceful situation prevailing in Kashmir in 2011 cannot be termed as return of normalcy on permanent basis. As long as Pakistan uses terrorism in Kashmir as a state policy and retains the ability to exercise that option; Kashmir will remain unsafe for Pandits to return.

One of the biggest confidence building measures among the Pandits would be if the majority community in the Valley assures them of their security and dignity. This can happen only if there is a change of heart on the part of majority community in Kashmir, which will enable them to overlook their own economic costs that Pandits' return will impose on them. For a microscopic minority to build enough confidence in the overwhelming Muslim majority of Kashmir, the willingness of the latter to welcome them back is a necessary prerequisite. At the moment, this possibility does not seem to exist. Under the circumstances, no amount of coercion, use of force, offering of incentives, etc., will persuade the Pandits to return to the Valley, only to be thrown out again. That would be catastrophic. On the other hand, if the government insists on a partial return without giving much thought to the underlying problem, it is likely to prove disastrous and counter-productive. Intricacies of similar situation have been aptly summed up by Erind D Mooney, special advisor to the United Nations Secretary General

on Internally Displaced, who also has a long experience of working in the office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights in Geneva. He states, "Simply providing aid to persons whose physical security is under threat not only neglects their protection needs but can actually exacerbate and perpetuate their plight, for instance by providing a false sense of security, shoring up repressive regimes, fostering long time dependency and even resulting in well-fed dead."[9]

Some years back one could safely assume that return of peace to the Valley depended largely on the improvement in Indo-Pak relations. But now, the situation in Afghanistan after the contemplated US withdrawal from there is also likely to impact the events in Kashmir. The whole region is geographically interlinked and historically interwoven. The seamless movement and operations carried out by Jehadis in the Af–pak areas are likely to increase, if the International Security Assistance Forces operating in Afghanistan were to leave lock stock and barrel. With the epicentre and command structure of these forces operating from Pakistan under the latter's overall supervision; the Jehadi activities are unlikely to leave Kashmir untouched. It is, therefore, unlikely that peace will return to Kashmir any time soon. Under the circumstances, hoping for the return of conditions conducive enough for Pandits to return, do not look bright.

It is also debatable whether the youth of the diaspora will be willing to return to the Valley on permanent basis for reasons which are varied and complicated. For one, Kashmir does not provide any employment opportunities in either industry or service sector, as no industries exist there and there is negligible growth in the service sector, because of two decades of militancy. The inability of these two crucial sectors to absorb a substantial number of youth in new jobs has even forced the local youth to seek jobs outside the State.

As government continues to be the main employer, beyond a point, it cannot provide jobs to everyone. The traditional employment generating industries like horticulture and handicraft suffered enormously due to militancy and has, therefore, not kept pace with the requirements of the liberalised economy or the requirements of the burgeoning number of job seekers. Similarly, schooling of young children too, poses serious problems. Having grown up in a free environment outside Kashmir, where religion has practically no place in their school curriculum, it will be almost unthinkable for these children to study in Valley schools, where every child is required to wear religion on his or her sleeve and where their soaring spirits get easily stifled.

Under the circumstances, the only ones who might think of returning, on experimental basis, would be small-time shopkeepers and those entirely dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. These displaced Pandits would be the only ones willing to return to Kashmir with even a lesser degree of security and political empowerment. Being poor and from rural background, getting back their land would provide them with their only source of livelihood. Though even in their case, a relatively small incident of violence against them can trigger panic and have devastating consequences.

For Kashmir and Kashmiri Pandits, a lot has changed during the last two decades. On the one hand, with fatigue setting-in among the people of Kashmir due to the two decade-old turmoil, some people in Kashmir do yearn for the olden days, when peace prevailed and Kashmiri Pandits' presence among them was taken for granted. Recently (end of 2011) 25 *Sarpanchs* (the elected heads of the local village councils) met to discuss the return of Kashmiri Pandits to Kashmir. It was for the first time after the exodus that the elected representatives of the people in Kashmir discussed the issue. By any reckoning, it represents a positive change among the local population. However, at the same time, the exodus has brought

about some critical changes among the Kashmiri Pandits, both at the individual as also at the community level. These changes militate against their desire to return to Kashmir.

Some years ago, an elderly Kashmiri Pandit refugee's last wish, made from his death-bed in Udhampur, was to go back to Kashmir. His family took him to Kud, not far from Udhampur, which looked like Kashmir. That was the kind of burning desire of that generation, which strongly connected to Kashmir. However, this is not true of Kashmiri Pandit youth who grew up outside Kashmir. They neither connect nor identify themselves with Kashmir in the same way as their elders did. Besides, Pandits of the older generation were predominantly state government employees and their world revolved around Kashmir. The new generation largely works in private enterprises within and outside India, turning them into global citizens. The Valley's economy provides no avenues for gainful employment of such youth, equipped as they are with the skills that are not in demand in Kashmir. Additionally, Kashmiri Pandit youth aspires for better career opportunities, which Kashmir cannot provide.

Widespread and rampant inter-community marriages amongst Kashmiri Pandits, have also ensured that the community is losing its distinct identity rapidly. High mortality and low birth rate has further accentuated the process of extinction of the Kashmiri Pandit community. Under such circumstances, even if ideal conditions were created for the return of Kashmiri Pandits to Kashmir, there may not be anyone willing or even left to go back there.

Nevertheless, acceptance by India, of the forced displacement of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley as a fait accompli, will amount to granting official recognition to the Islamists' success in turning Kashmir into an entirely Islamic state. In its own estimation, and in the eyes of the world, such recognition by India will make its

credentials, as a democratic and secular country, ring extremely hollow: its much hyped cooperative federalism will lie in tatters. Despite pushing the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits under the carpet; history will be unrelenting in judging India's claim to being a liberal democracy. Can India accept this kind of situation without paying a heavy price in terms of its standing in the world, particularly at a time when it is emerging as a big economic power house and a regional power?

Turning Adversity into Opportunity

Forced displacement thrusts numerous adverse situations on the displaced; uprooting, loss of assets, social disorder and breakdown of norm. Such experience can be summed up as trauma. It is a well established fact that refugees go through a process of adaptation, which includes, a stage of 'arrival euphoria' lasting two to six months, followed by six months to two years of disillusionment, which creates a heightened risk of mental illness. Both these stages are finally followed by adaptation. That is the time when displaced people start picking up the threads and start the process of rebuilding their lives. Cataclysmic experience like forced displacement, can also provide a new platform for take-off. In the long run, the displaced community would find itself substantially better off, experiencing the law of increasing returns, till it reaches the point of inflection.

There are many instances in history which point to a very significant but the least talked of the fallouts of mass exodus, viz, turning adversity into an opportunity. History is replete with examples which prove that individuals/groups of people who have become refugees have succeeded beyond the routine, in their new environment. Jews, after exodus from their Biblical lands in Palestine; millions who were part of history's greatest mass exodus of people after the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947; thousands upon thousands who flocked to America after its accidental discovery

in the seventeenth century, easily come to one's mind. Some of the greatest names in history, particularly in the recent past, have been refugees. Jews today are the most successful/ influential ethnic group in the US. Similarly, some of the most prominent leaders/achievers in various fields, in the recent past, have been refugees. As Dr KN Pandita mentions, "All these people did not allow the adversity to crush them, but turned it into a challenge to realise their dreams. Refugees have created great civilisations in human history — along the Nile, the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Oxus, the Danube, the Seine, the Indus and the Ganges, and lately the Potomac. Diasporas have created new parameters of human culture. This they did by unleashing that hidden and dormant potential in order to create a new world, a new civilisation, and a new vision."[10] Those refugees who belonged to remote and semi-closed regions of the Valley, found newer and unheard of avenues of employment and new occupational fields. During a survey carried out in 2006, about 50 per cent of the refugees accepted that exodus had increased their awareness levels, which helped them to land better jobs. Thus, in their case, the displacement was a step towards attaining better social and economic status in terms of physical assets and human capital.

It is axiomatic that displaced people tend to behave in conservative, risk-avoiding ways, clinging to familiar practices and groupings. As they re-establish themselves economically and socially, they leave this period of stress and insecurity behind. People now begin to behave in more innovative and risk-taking ways and their attitudes become increasingly flexible, individualistic and open-ended. This happens because the simplified cultural repertoire and the breakdowns of patterns of community organisation and leadership that occur during resettlement, make for less restraint on diversity and individual initiative, as the relocated community re-establishes itself. In the process, the community no longer finds itself outside management and gets integrated into wider regional

setting in such a way that it gains economic and administrative ability. At the same time, many refugees adapt themselves very well, taking advantage of the new opportunities that present themselves, to forge better lives for themselves and their families. Displacement, while difficult and traumatic, does not have a uniformly negative impact on the victims, both individually and collectively. Depending on the initiative displayed, resources available, opportunities offered by the new environment, the refugees might eventually benefit from such displacement. Even though reluctantly in the beginning and in most cases grievingly, the refugees will give up old attachments and make new ones, accepting the new relationships in the process and finding sources of pleasure there-in.

Even though there is always a conflict between adopting the new environment and the desire to restore the past, the fact remains that compulsion of the circumstances forces meaningful participation in looking for a way ahead with optimism and hope. This alone will allow the displaced to pay attention to future rather than be chained to the past. Over the centuries, Kashmiri Pandits have shown remarkable ability to adapt to the new environment that they had to face after every exodus from the Valley. They have made use of every opportunity available outside to carve out a new and brighter future. Their new generations had little scope for a worthwhile future in the Valley and therefore, the displacement forced on them might, eventually, prove to be a blessing in disguise. However, this optimism is only applicable at the individual level and not at the community level, because it is unlikely that this microscopic minority of Kashmiri Pandits will be able to salvage their culture and social customs once the link with Kashmir is permanently severed.

Some members of the community often quote the example of Jews while drawing inspiration from their determination to return to the Promised Land after a long absence of nearly two millennia. Kashmiri Pandits feel that they too can return to the Valley if only

they can somehow keep the hope of such return burning in the hearts and minds of the future generations. However, this comparison is only cosmetic. The community has to understand that the most important factor that helped the Jews to survive was their ability to adhere to their religious and spiritual traditions and pass these on from generation to generation, with single-minded resolve. They were also successful in reviving the language of their spiritual discourse as most of them learn to read and write Hebrew, as a matter of routine. Same thing cannot be said of Kashmiri Pandits, who are not familiar with Sanskrit language; they are not able to read and understand their religious texts or construct a sentence. Same applies to their mother tongue, Kashmiri. Therefore, quoting the Jewish example may be a good idea to motivate the community, but the fact is that Kashmiri Pandits do not come anywhere close to the Jews in their survival technique. In the ocean of diversity of Hindus in India, Kashmiri Pandits are, therefore, bound to get submerged in it; in the process, losing their unique and distinct identity as an ethnic group.

Notes

1. Vir Singhvi, *Both India and Democracy itself have Failed the Kashmiri Pandits*, posted on January 20, 2012, downloaded from kashmir_forum@googlegroups.com.
2. *Tribune News Service*, New Delhi, March 21, 2011, downloaded from kashmir-interchange@googlegroups.com on 28 March, 2011.
3. Ibid.
4. Dr Ajay Chrangoo, *Koshur Samachar*, November 2009, p. 21.
5. *Tribune News Service*, n. 2.
6. Hindustantimes.com, date-lined November 17, 2009.
7. News carried by local newspaper in Kashmir: Downloaded from KP Network@ yahoogroups.com: April 1, 2009.
8. Maj Gen GD Bakshi, (Retd), *The Times of India*, November 18, 2011.
9. Dr Ajay Chrangoo, President, Panun Kashmir, *Koshur Samachar*, January 2010, p. 16.
10. Dr KN Pandita, *Voice of Silence*, Jammu.

APPENDICES

Appendix 'A'

Important dates in the history of the State after its formation

1846–1857	Maharaja Gulab Singh.
1857–1885	Maharaja Ranbir Singh.
1885–1925	Maharaja Partap Singh.
1925–1947	Maharaja Hari Singh.
1915	First horse-driven cart arrived in Srinagar, using the cart road constructed over the Banihal Pass; later to be developed as National Highway1A (NH 1A).
1932–1934	In 1932, the Muslim Reading Room Party was turned into J&K Muslim Conference by Sheikh Abdullah, who also became its first President. Initially, its sole aim was to seek justice for Muslim, but with the passage of time, it became a strong movement against the Dogra rule. This led to the passing of Constitutional Act, 1934, to create a diarchic form of Government. It stipulated the formation of a 75-member Legislative Assembly; 35 of which would be elected. By this time, differences had arisen in the Working Committee of Muslim Conference (MC) in regard to the constitutional reforms propounded by the Maharaja. These differences finally resulted in the breakup of MC, with Sheikh Abdullah leading the breakaway faction, the National Conference (NC), with its membership now thrown open to all classes, irrespective of religion.

1938–39	With Sheikh Abdullah receiving increasing support for his movement against the Maharaja from Indian National Congress, and particularly from Pandit Nehru, the NC gained wide acceptability among people and made deep inroads into Valley's rural areas.
1942	Jammat-e-Islami (JI) formed at Shopian by Maulvi Ghulam Ahmed Dar in collaboration with Syed Shahabadudin.
1944	Resolution of 'Naya Kashmir' was adopted by the NC. Same year, Mohammad Ali Jinnah visited Kashmir.
10 May 1946	Quit Kashmir Movement launched; Sheikh arrested. Nehru arrives in Kashmir to plead his case, but is arrested by the Maharaja.
Oct 1946	MC under the leadership of Maulvi Yousuf Shah launches 'Direct Action' campaign.
12 Aug 1947	Maharaja offered 'Stand still' agreement to both India and Pakistan. Pakistan accepted it, but India sought some clarifications.
22 Oct 1947	Tribal invasion of the State launched by Pakistan.
23 Oct 1947	Muzafarabad and several towns captured by invading forces.
24 Oct 1947	Mohara Power Station captured. Baramulla falls.
25 Oct 1947	Maharaja Hari Singh asked for Indian assistance, which was declined.
26 Oct 1947	(a) Accession offered, (b) Instrument of Accession signed.
27 Oct 1947	(a) Indian troops arrive in J&K and (b) Brig Ghansara Singh was sent as Governor of Gilgit, once the British paramountcy expired on Oct 30. Muslim officers and men mutinied and took the Governor prisoner. The Garrison Commander, Maj Brown, hoisted Pakistani flag on Nov 4, 1947.
29 Oct 1947	Sheikh Abdullah heads Emergency Government (called Chief Emergency Administrator).
30 Dec 1947	India takes the case to UN.
01 Jan 1948	UNSC passed the following Resolutions: (a) Jan 48 - Appealed for improvement in situation. (b) 17 April 48 - Set up 5-member Commission to mediate between India and Pak. (c) 13 Aug 48 - (See below)
04 Mar 1948	Sheikh Abdullah appointed PM.
05 Mar 1948	Elections to State Legislative Assembly, subsequently designated as Constituent Assembly, held.

13 Aug 1948	Most significant UN Resolution passed. It had three parts: (a) Part I – related to ceasefire (called for immediate ceasefire). (b) Part II - Made it incumbent upon Pakistan to withdraw all forces, regular and irregular, while India was required to reduce its forces and (c) Part III -"The Government of India and Pakistan reaffirm their wish that the future status of J&K shall be determined in accordance with the will of the people. To that end, upon the acceptance of the said agreement, both countries agree to enter into consultation with the Commission to determine fair and equitable conditions, whereby such free expression of the will be assured." 4th Resolution was supplement of the Third Resolution. One of the important assurances given by the "UN Commission for India and Pakistan" (UNCIP) was that "The plebiscite proposal shall not be binding upon India, if Pakistan does not implement Part-I or Part-II of the resolution of Aug 48."
01 Jan 1949	Ceasefire resolution comes into effect.
12 Mar 1949	Admiral Nimitz was designated as Plebiscite Administrator and UNCIP deputed to settle ceasefire and supervise it.
09 Jun 1949	Maharaja abdicates and vests all his powers in his son, Karan Singh.
27 Jul 1949	Karachi Agreement signed. Its main features were: (a) CFL (Ceasefire Line) was delineated based on the general line occupied by respective countries on 01 Jan 1949. (b) Troops on both sides to remain at least 500 yards on either side of the CFL. (c) Both sides were free to adjust their defences behind the CFL, subject to no laying of wire/mines (d) No additional military potential would be introduced into J&K by either side and (e) UNCIP stations observers as deemed necessary.
14 Mar 1950	Sir Owen Dixon appointed representative of the United Nations in place of UNCIP to find a lasting solution to Kashmir Problem.
Oct 1950	General Council of NC passes a resolution demanding holding of elections to Constituent Assembly.
01 May 1951	Karan Singh issues a proclamation instituting a Constituent Assembly.
Oct 1951	Elections held. NC won all 75 seats, 73 unopposed and 2 contested. Jammu's Praja Parishad boycotted the elections.
31 Oct 1951	Constituent Assembly meets.
07 Aug 1953	Sheikh Abdullah delivers a virulently anti-India speech.

09 Aug 1953	Sheikh Abdullah arrested. Deputy Prime Minister, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad sworn-in as the PM.
06 Feb 1954	Constituent Assembly ratifies Accession.
1954	First Constitution (Application to J&K State) Order was issued by the President. Through this, India applied certain provisions of the Constitution of India to the State.
09 Aug 1955	Plebiscite Front formed by Mirza Afzal Beg.
1956	Under Article I of the Constitution of India, the State of Jammu and Kashmir is included as one of the states of the Republic of India, vide Indian Constitution Act 1956 (Seventh Amendment). However, Article 370, providing special status to the State, is retained.
19 Nov 1956	Assembly elections held. People give formal sanction to the Accession.
26 Jan 1957	The State Assembly formally adopts the State's Constitution.
1958	Through an amendment to Article 312 of the Indian Constitution, All India Services are extended to the State.
08 Jan 1958	Sheikh Abdullah released.
21 Feb 1958	Sheikh Abdullah's' lecture at Hazratbal leads to large-scale riots.
29 Apr 1958	Sheikh Abdullah is re-arrested.
21 May 1958	Kashmir Conspiracy Case is initiated.
1959	Permit system of entry into the State is done away with.
Oct/Nov 1962	Sino–India war.
04 Oct 1963	Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad resigns under Kamraj Plan. Shamsuddin is sworn is as PM.
27 Dec 1963	Mo-e–Muqadas is found missing from Hazratbal Shrine.
04 Jan 1964	Relic found and replaced in Hazratbal.
03 Feb 1964	Relic identified as real by Mirakh Shah.
29 Feb 1964	GM Sadiq becomes PM.
08 Apr 1964	Kashmir Conspiracy Case is withdrawn. Sheikh Abdullah is released from prison.
May 1964	Sheikh Abdullah goes to Pakistan to meet Ayub Khan and others on Nehru's bidding.
27 May 1964	Nehru dies. Sheikh Abdullah cuts short visit to Pak and returns.

Feb 1965	Sheikh Abdullah goes to Saudi Arabia for Haj.
28 Mar 1965	Sheikh Abdullah meets Chou-En-Lai.
09 May 1965	Sheikh Abdullah is re-arrested.
30 May 1965	Article 249 of the Indian Constitution is extended to the State. This would enable the Centre to legislate on any issue, just like in other states.
30 May 1965	Designation of PM and Sadr-e-Riyasat changed to Chief Minister and Governor respectively.
05 Aug 1965	Pakistani Mujahids enter valley.
01 Sep 1965	Pak launches massive attack in Chhamb.
16 Sep 1965	China issues ultimatum to India. Pakistan offers cease-fire. India accepts the offer.
22 Sept 1965	Cease-fire declared.
10 Jan 1966	Tashkent Declaration signed.
08 Dec 1967	Sheikh Abdullah released.
08 Jan 1971	Sheikh, GM Shah and Beg expelled from the state.
12 Jan 1971	Plebiscite Front banned.
03 Dec 1971	Bangladesh war.
13 Dec 1971	GM Saqid dies and Mir Qasim takes over as CM.
16 Dec 1971	Pak Army surrenders in East Pakistan. Bangladesh born.
03 Jul 1972	Simla Agreement signed. CFL becomes Line of Control (LoC).
24 Feb 1975	Kashmir Accord between Sheikh Abdullah and Indira Gandhi signed.
25 Feb 1975	Sheikh Abdullah takes over as CM.
13 Apr 1975	Sheikh Abdullah becomes President of NC.
Mar 1977	Parliamentary elections held.
09 Jun 1977	State elections held. NC wins.
09 Jul 1977	(a) Sheikh sworn as CM. (b) Resettlement Act passed in Assembly.
25 Sep 1978	Beg asked to resign as relations between two lifelong colleagues sours.
08 Sep 1982	Sheikh dies. Farooq is sworn in as the Chief Minister.

19 Oct 1983	India–West Indies Cricket match in Srinagar is disrupted by anti-national elements, providing first signs of the shape of things to come.
02 Apr 1984	Jagmohan takes over as Governor for the first time.
07 Mar 1986	G.M. Shah Government dismissed.
Nov 1986	Violence let loose on Hindus in Kashmir by radical Isamists, particularly in Anantnag. A large number of ancient temples destroyed and cows slaughtered to hurt Hindu sentiment.
Nov 1986	Rajiv–Farooq Accord signed to fight the forthcoming elections jointly.
Mar 1987	Fresh elections, widely believed to be rigged, held.
12 Jul 1989	Jagmohan resigns.
19 Sep 1989	Tika Lal Taploo assassinated.
18 Jan 1990	Farooq Abdullah resigns.
19 Jan 1990	Jagmohan appointed Governor again.
Night 19/20 Jan 1990	Terrifying night long posturing by entire Muslim population of Kashmir by means of mass demonstrations, use of mosque pulpits and public address systems, physical intimidation of the microscopic Kashmiri Pandit minority, compels them to flee en masse from the Valley. Kashmiri Pandits refer to the night as Holocaust Night. Mass exodus Commences.
21 May 1990	Maulvi Farooq killed by armed militants.
26 May 1990	Jagmohan resigns.
1995	Mohammad Sultan Bhatt, brother of Abdul Gani Bhatt, Chairman APHC killed.
22 Mar 1997	Sangram Pura massacre; seven Kashmiri Pandits killed by heavily armed militants.
Jun 1997	32 Hindus killed in Udhampur district by heavily armed militants.
25 Jan 1998	Wandhama massacre; militants kill 23 Kashmiri Pandits in cold blood on the Islamic night of prayer, Shab-e-Barat.
Apr 1998	Prankot massacre; 27 Hindus, including 11 children, killed by militants.
May-Jul 1999	Kargil War

Mar 2000	35 Sikhs killed by militants in Chhittisinghpora village, 68 Kms from Srinagar.
22 May 2002	Abdul Gani Lone, a moderate separatist leader, killed by Al Umar Mujahideen.
2002	Assembly polls held.
24 Mar 2003	Nandimarg massacre; 24 Kashmiri Pandits, including 2 children and 11 women killed by militants.
Sep 2003	All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) splits. Syed Ali Shah Geelani heads the breakway faction, Tehrik e Hurriyat.
Jul-Aug 2008	Amarnath land row orchestrated by PDP and led by separatists paralyses life in the State. The Congress-led government falls.
2008	Assembly polls held. NC and Congress form a coalition government. Umar Abdullah becomes Chief Minister.
2010	Widespread demonstrations, orchestrated by separatists, and led by stone pelters paralyse life in the Valley. In the two month long turmoil, 115 young men were killed, mostly in police firing.
Oct 2010	Three-member team of interlocutors constituted by the Center to suggest ways for facilitating the normalisation of political situation in the state
May-Jul 2011	Panchayat polls held in the State to elect 29,707 Panchs and 4,128 Sarpanchs, recorded a massive turnout of voters in the Valley. Official estimates put it at nearly 80 per cent.
19 Jul 2011	Dr Ghulam Nabi Fai, a Kashmiri settled in US and Executive Director of pro–separatist Kashmir American Council, who has played a crucial role in lobbying with US Congressmen and propagating Pakistani viewpoint in the US during the last two decades of turmoil in the Valley, arrested in the US by FBI.
24 May 2012	Government of India after receiving the reports from the interlocutors earlier, made it public by uploading it on the Union Home Ministry's web site. Both the Hurrriyat factions rejected the report, as did the main opposition party in India, the BJP.
Jun 2012	Amarnath yatra reduced to 39 days this year.
25 Jun 2012	350 year old Dastgir Sahib Shrine, located at Khanyar in Srinagar, which housed a relic of 11th century Sufi Saint, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani, gutted in a fire.

Appendix 'B'

Main Parties Forming Hurriyat Conference

- Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front.
- People's Conference.
- Awami Action Committee.
- Jammat-e-Islami (JI).

Besides above, following smaller parties also form part of this separatist conglomerate:

- Ittihad ul Muslimeen- Shia Party, headed by Maulana Abbas Ansari
- Bazme Tawheed.
- Jammat-e-Ahle Hadis.
- Traders Federation, Srinagar.
- People's Movement.
- Freedom Movement.
- Kashmir Bar Association.
- Kashmir Study Circle.
- Dukhtaran-e-Millat

Appendix 'C'

Ultimatum issued by Hizb-Ul-Mujahideen to Kashmiri Pandits (Published in Al Safa, dated April 14, 1990)

"Pandits, responsible for having perpetrated oppression and atrocity on the Muslims should quit in two days."

"A spokesman of Hizb-ul-Mujahideen has stated that in a meeting of its Area Commanders, held yesterday, a decision was taken to give an ultimatum to the Kashmiri Pandits to leave Kashmir in two days. The spokesman said that all Pandits of Jammu and Kashmir should leave from here in two days. According to the spokesman, behind the oppression and persecution of Muslims, Pandits have a hand. He said that all the Pandits have become the instruments of Indian imperialism. He said that Pandits have received training in arms outside the Valley and have drawn up plans to foment disturbances of a serious nature. He said that the Area Commanders feel that the Pandits have a hand in the recent arrest of Mujahideen as well as the raids on their quarters. The spokesman said that the oppression against the Muslims is unleashed by them."

(Translated from Urdu)

Extracts of a Sermon Broadcast on the public address system of a Mosque in Srinagar, on January 27–28, 1990.

"The aim of the Jehad is Azadi and it is enjoined by Almighty on all followers of 'Tauheed' to participate in the Jehad. The crusade is for the establishment of Kashmir into an Islamic society. The heretics

can only live in Islamic society if they accept the Islamic laws. The non-Muslims have always helped the usurpers from outside to enslave the Muslim masses in Kashmir. For them, therefore, the only way is to quit this 'pak sarzameen' (sacred land).

We have always protected the non-Muslims and they have always indulged in espionage. Now they are bewildered because the day of reckoning is on their head."

(Source: White Paper on Kashmir, prepared by
Joint Human Rights Committee)

Appendix 'D'

Handout issued by Hizb-Ul-Islam in 1990

"Islam is our aim; Quran is our constitution;
Jehad is our path; war till victory; God is great;
War cry of Hizb is 'Allah o Akbar; the cry of Hizb-ul-Islam,
Take heed India."

1. The Muslim brotherhood in Kashmir has risen in arms against the usurpers of its freedom, which has been snatched in 1947, and ever since. The Muslims have now taken to arms to free themselves from the slavery; Muslim youth in the cities and towns and in the villages are to receive training in the use of arms to engage the Indian security forces.

2. There is no going back after the armed struggle begins. The Jehad is invincible. We demand our right to freedom, which has been recognised by the United Nations Organisation in 1947, and the British Government that ruled India then.

3. An all round attack has to be launched on the state administration which has run the Indian colonial administrative machine in the state, the Indian security forces, at whose hands thousands of Mujahids have attained martyrdom and the enemies of the freedom of the Muslim brotherhood in Kashmir.

4. Muslim brotherhood is an integral part of the Umat e Islami,

the Muslim nation of the world, which can no more be divided by any boundaries. There is no boundary between Kashmir and the Muslim commonwealth of Pakistan, except that imposed by Indian imposters, which at present divides the Muslims of Kashmir.

5. Traitors to the cause of Islam will alone shirk the responsibility to serve the cause of Islam and they will receive the punishment that they ought to be given. All servants are enjoined to do whatever is in their power to wreck the government from inside and outside; harass, demoralise and destroy Indian security personnel; eliminate the enemies of revolution, propagate Muslim law and Muslim code of life, which is supreme law in Kashmir and participate in mass resistance to Indian oppression.

6. The community of Pandits in Kashmir, which has in it the treacherous agents of India, has no option but to submit to the law of Islam, as the supreme law in Kashmir or leave Kashmir.

7. Our youth is prepared to fight the Indian military with the support of the great Islamic Mujahideen of Palestine and Afghanistan. They will achieve victory and liberate the Muslims here from the clutches of an oppressive and crafty usurper. Muslims have always fought for freedom and won it. Jehad is victorious!

Appendix 'E'

List of Kashmiri Pandits/others Killed in the Initial Phase of Militancy

Sl. No.	Name	Address	Profession	Date of Assassination
1	A Kumar Ganjoo	Sathu Barbershah, Srinagar	Not Known	03-04-87
2	Swami K Nath	Vicharnag, Srinagar	Pujari (Priest)	09-12-88
3	Tika Lal Taploo	Chinkral Mohalla, Srinagar	Advocate, Social Worker and Political Activist	14-09-89
4	Nila Kanth Ganjoo	Karan Nagar, Srinagar	Ex. Session Judge	04-10-89
5	Ms Sheela Tickoo	Srinagar	House wife	31-10-89
6	Prem Nath Bhat	Anantnag	Advocate	27-12-89
7	Pawan Kumar	Zaindar Mohalla, Srinagar	Shopkeeper	Killed in 1989, Exact date not known
8	RPN. Singh	Anantnag	Central Govt. Employee	-do-
9	ML Bhan	Khonomoh, Srinagar	-do-	15-01-90
10	Baldev Raj Dutta	Srinagar	Telecom operator	19-01-90
11	Krishan Gopal Berwa	Budgam	Central Govt. Employee	01-02-90

12	Ramesh Kumar Thusoo	Trehgam, Kupwara	Govt. Servant	01-02-90
13	Satish Kumar Tikoo	Karfali Mohalla, Srinagar	Govt. Servant	02-02-90
14	Tej Krishen Razdan	Gawkadal, Srinagar	-do-	12-02-90
15	Rattan Lal	Srinagar	-	13-02-90
16	Lassa Koul	Bemina, Srinagar	Director, Doordarshan Srinagar	13-02-90
17	Anil Bhan	Kanikadal, Srinagar	Bank Probationary Officer	16-02-90
18	AK Qazi	Tankipora, Srinagar	Handicraft	25-02-90
19	Moti Singh	Kathua	Govt Service	27-02-90
20	Naveen Saproo	Habbakadal, Srinagar	Telecom employee	27-02-90
21	PL Fotedar	Bijebehara, Anantnag	Govt. Servant	28-02-90
22	PN Handoo	Balgarden, Srinagar	Govt Officer	01-03-90
23	Tej Kishen	Budgam	-	01-03-90
24	Joginder Singh	Not Known	Not Known	03-03-90
25	Jaggar Nath	Yer Khushipora, Anantnag	Police	03-03-90
26	Kashi Nath	Kathidarwaza, Srinagar	Retd.	06-03-90
27	RN Handoo	Narsinghgarh, Srinagar	-	18-03-90
28	Dinesh Lal	Karan Nagar, Srinagar	Shopkeeper	19-03-90
29	AK Raina	Srinagar	Govt. Servant	19-03-90
30	Om Prakash	Shopian, Pulwama	Govt. Servant	19-03-90
31	PN Koul	Bijbehara, Anantnag	Agri Deptt	22-03-90

32	Tara Chand Ambardar	Zaindar Mohalla, Srinagar	-do-	23-03-90
33	BK Gangoo	Chotta Bazar, Srinagar	Telecom. Deptt	23-03-90
34	BL Misri	Peer Bagh, Srinagar	-do-	23-03-90
35	AK Bazaz	Safa Kadal, Srinagar	Service	26-03-90
36	Ashok Kumar	Wadipora, Srinagar	-do-	26-03-90
37	Punit Sahini	Zaindar Mohalla, Srinagar	-	27-03-90
38	Ramesh Sahini	Zaindar Mohalla, Srinagar	Business	27-03-90
39	Soom Nath Tickoo	Ganderbal, Srinagar	-do-	-do
40	Sh. Paul	Amira Kadal,Srinagar	-do-	-do-
41	Rattan Lal	Lolab, Kupwara	-do-	-do-
42	Amrik Singh	Amira Kadal, Srinagar	Business	-do-
43	Ms Devi	Allachi Bagh, Srinagar	House wife	-do-
44	PN Handoo	Srinagar	Govt. Servant	01-04-90
45	KK Koul	Srinagar	Business	05-04-90
46	Radha Krishen	Karan Nagar, Srinagar	Business	05-04-90
47	Prem Nath Koul	Kuil, Pulwama	N.A	05-04-90
48	Ramesh K Peer	Vichar Nagh, Srinagar	Service	06-04-90
49	HL Khera	Srinagar	Gen. Manager (HMT)	10-04-90
50	Makhan Lal Wangnoo	Srinagar	-do-	10-04-90
51	Dina Nath	-	-	13-04-90

52	Sarla Bhatt	Srinagar		19-04-90
53	Makhan Lal	Kanikadal, Srinagar	-do-	21-04-90
54	Sunil Kotru	Rainawari, Srinagar	-do-	22-04-90
55	Joginder Malhotra	Safakadal, Srinagar	Business	22-04-90
56	Ravinder K Pandita	Mattan, Anantnag	-	24-04-90
57	Narendar Nath	Rainawari, Srinagar	-do-	24-04-90
58	Niranjan Nath	Akingam, Anantnag	Business	24-04-90
59	Kashi Ram	Badgam	Service	25-04-90
60	Sarup Sampath	Zakura, Budgam	-do-	25-04-90
61	Surender Khar	Mattan, Anantnag	-do-	25-04-90
62	Smt. Sarla Bhat	Qazi Mohalla, Anantnag	-do-	25-04-90
63	Dr. Raj Nath	New Khanda, Srinagar	-do-	26-04-90
64	Bushan Lal	Budgam	-do-	26-04-90
65	Brij Lal Shah	Sadhu Ganga, Kupwara	-do-	27-04-90
66	ML Pandita	Tikri, Kupwara	-do-	27-04-90
67	Bharat Bushan Koul	Pampore, Srinagar	-do-	28-04-90
68	Bansi Lal	Chattergul, Anantnag	Business	28-04-90
69	Prediman Krishen Bhat	Lolab, Sogam	NA	28-04-90
70	Dwarika Nath	Anantnag	Service	30-04-90
71	Daleep Kumar	Nowhatta, Srinagar	-do-	30-04-90
72	Daleep Singh	Shopian, Pulwama	Service	30-04-90

73	Heera Lal Khar	Kak Mohalla, Srinagar	Police Officer	30-04-90
74	Sarwanand Koul (Premi)	Soaf, Anantnag	Retd.	01-05-90
75	Virender Kumar	Soaf, Anantnag	Service	01-05-90
76	Makhan Lal Thaploo	Anantnag	Business	02-05-90
77	Chuni Lal Shalla	Kupwara	-do-	02-05-90
78	Surinder Kumar Raina	Tullamula, Ganderbal	-	02-05-90
79	Virender Kumar Chatta	Baramulla	Service	03-05-90
80	Saroop Nath	Beru, Badgam	-do-	03-05-90
81	Vinod Kumar	Natipora, Srinagar	-do-	03-05-90-
82	Surinder Dhar	Habba Kadal, Srinagar	Service	05-05-90
83	Prof. KL Ganjoo	Sopore	Service	07-05-90
84	Ms Prana Ganjoo	Sopore	Service	07-05-90
85	Dolly	Karan Nagar, Srinagar	NA	07-05-90
86	Dev Kant Roy	Srinagar	Pvt. Employee	08-05-90
87	Bihari Labroo	Anantnag	Not Known	09-05-90
88	Inderjeet	Chadura, Badgam	Cloth Merchant	10-05-90
89	Gulshan Lal	Pulwama	NA	10-05-90
90	Rattan Lal	V Khaller	NA	10-05-90
91	Amar Nath Bagati	Srinagar	NA	11-05-90
92	Daya Krishan Duloo	Srinagar	-do-	12-05-90
93	Mohan Lal	Anantnag	Service	13-05-90
94	Chaman Lal	Badgam	-do-	13-05-90

95	Ashok Kumar	Pulwama		13-05-90
96	Veerji	Badgam	-do-	13-05-90
97	Bushan Lal	Srinagar	-do-	13-05-90
98	Kaka Singh	Jammu	-do-	13-05-90
99	S Gudoo Singh	Srinagar	Business	15-05-90
100	AK Wazir	Srinagar	Service	15-05-90
101	Kular Sharma	-do-	-do-	16-05-90
102	Sham Lal Sharma	Vanpoh, Anantnag	-do-	17-05-90
103	Bal Raj Suri	Srinagar	Shopkeeper	17-05-90
104	Bushan Lal	Anantnag	Service	17-05-90
105	Suresh Kumar Kisoo	Purshiyar, Srinagar	-do-	17-05-90
106	Chuni Lal	Habakadal, Srinagar	Business	17-05-90
107	Man Mohan Sharma (Bachloo)	Baramulla	-do-	18-05-90
108	Jia Lal Kaw	Handwara	-	18-05-90
109	Minor Son of Jia Lal Kaw	Handwara	-	18-05-90
110	Dilip Kumar	Shopian		19-05-90
111	Moti Lal Raina	Rainawari, Srinagar	-do-	20-05-90
112	Pran Nath Bhat	Anantnag	-do-	21-05-90
113	Daleep Ji	-do-	-do-	21-05-90
114	Prithvi Nath Hakim	Nowgam, Srinagar	Hakim	21-05-90
115	Shamboo Nath	Anantnag	-do-	22-05-90
116	Niranjan Nath	Anantnag		26-05-90
117	Harbans Singh	Jammu	-do-	28-05-90
118	Ramesh Kumar Raina	-do-	-do-	28-05-90
119	Jawahir Lal Wanchoo	Rainawari, Srinagar	Service	30-05-90

120	Chaman Lal Tickoo	Ganderbal, Srinagar	Service	31-05-90
121	Krishen Lal Wagroo	Badgam	Service	31-05-90
122	Mahraj Krishan	Kupwara	Service	30-06-90
123	Jagar Nath	Bemina, Srinagar	-do-	31-05-90
124	Avtar Krishan	Bagi Mehtab, Srinagar	-do-	31-05-90
125	Ramesh Kumar	Anantnag	Service	01-06-90
126	Badri Nath	Gosanigund, Anantnag	Govt. Servant	02-06-90
127	Damodar Raina	Kulgam, Anantnag	Retd.	02-06-90
128	Shiban Krishen Kallu	Bagi Mehtab, Srinagar	Police Inspector	03-06-90
129	Ms Girija Tikoo	Bandipore	Teacher	04-06-90
130	Shiban Krishan Koul	Baramulla	Business	04-06-90
131	Aftab Ram	Rainawari, Srinagar	Retired	04-06-90
132	Gokal Nath	Bagi Mehtab, Srinagar	-	04-06-90
133	Radha Krishan Patwari	Turoo, Anantnag	Patwari	06-06-90
134	Raj Kumar Jailkhani	Zero Bridge, Srinagar	-	07-06-90
135	Sham Lal	Lal Mandi, Srinagar	Shopkeeper	07-06-90
136	Chhota Lal	Maisuma, Srinagar	-	07-06-90
137	Rajesh Kumar	Rehari colony, Jammu	Service	08-06-90
138	Ajaib Singh	Poonch	Service	08-06-90
139	Raju Sharma	-	-	08-06-90
140	Ishwar Dass of Jammu	Khanabal, Anantnag	Police Deptt.	11-06-90

141	Bahadur Singh of Jammu	-do-	-do-	11-06-90
142	Triloki Nath	Mahraj Gunj, Srinagar	Petition Writer	12-06-90
143	Chaman Lal	Kawoosa	Teacher	Exact date not known
144	AK Safaya	Habakadal, Srinagar	JK Bank, Manager	15-06-90
145	Dayaram Koul	Srinagar	-	15-06-90
146	Ashok Kumar	Sopore	Service	15-06-90
147	Jawahar Lal Ganjoo	Bana Mohalla, Srinagar	Service	18-06-90
148	Durga Kaul	-do-	-do-	18-06-90
149	Badri Kaul	-do-	-do-	18-06-90
150	Rajinder Kumar Tickoo	Pulwama, Shopian	Shopkeeper	Exact date not known
151	Pushkar Nath	Danwachi	-do-	11-06-90
152	Omkar Nath Raina	Devi Angan, Srinagar	Service	11-05-90
153	Inder Kumar	Natipora, Srinagar	-	11-06-90
154	Kanya Lal	Mahraj Gunj, Srinagar	Service	11-06-90
155	Desh Raj	Hari Singh High Street, Srinagar	-	16-06-90
156	Gopi Chand	Kupwara	-	17-06-90
157	Sanjay Thusoo	Nowgam, Srinagar	-	22-06-90
158	Bal Krishan Tatoo	Habba Kadal, Srinagar	-	22-06-90
159	Makhan Lal Raina	Srinagar	-	22-06-90
160	Ashwani Kumar	Srinagar	-	23-06-90
161	Ashok Kumar	Khanka Sukhta, Srinagar	-	23-06-90

162	Chaman Lal Koul	-	-	24-06-90
163	Soom Nath	Chattabal, Srinagar	-	24-06-90
164	TN Raina	Srinagar	Jt. Director, Sericulture	26-06-90
165	Satish Kumar	Ganderbal, Srinagar	Service	26-06-90
166	Brij Lal Raina	Dambi Dola	Rev. Service	26-06-90
167	Yogesh Kumar	Rambagh, Srinagar	-	26-06-90
168	Ram Chand	Behama	-	26-06-90
169	Shamboo Nath	-	-	30-06-90
170	Prof. NK Koul	Khan Sokhta, Srinagar	-	30-06-90
171	Shridar Joo	-	-	01-07-90
172	Babli	Drusu, Pulwama	Student	01-07-90
173	Roopawati (Mother of Babli)	-do-	House wife	01-07-90
174	Teja Dhar	Ali kadal, Srinagar	-	01-07-90
175	Raj Nath Dhar	-do-	Service	01-07-90
176	Girja Vhar	-do-	-do-	01-07-90
177	Dina Nath	-do-	-do-	01-07-90
178	Predman Krishn	Kokernag, Anantnag	-	02-07-90
179	Arandatti	Batyar, Srinagar	-	02-07-90
180	Mohan Lal	Harwan, Srinagar	-	03-07-90
181	Arjan Nath	Shopian	-	03-07-90
182	Makhan Lal	Srinagar	-	03-07-90
183	Dharam Dass	-	-	03-07-90
184	Hari Krishan	Uri	-	06-07-90
185	Jawahar Lal	Harwan, Srinagar	-	06-07-90

186	Satish Kumar	Baramulla	-	06-07-90
187	Dina Nath Muju	Rawalpora, Srinagar	-	07-07-90
188	Gopi Nath Kangan	Ganderbal	-	08-07-90
189	Autar Krishan	Hawal, Srinagar	-	08-07-90
190	Suraj Prakash	Rainawari, Srinagar	-	09-07-90
191	Gauri Shanker	Baramulla	-	09-07-90
192	Shiban Koul	Tangmarg	Police Deptt.	09-07-90
193	PK Kotru	Srinagar	State employee	09-07-90
194	Inder Krishen	Mehjoor Nagar, Srinagar	-	10-07-90
195	Kuldeep Chand	Natipora	-	10-07-90
196	Nana Ji	Batmaloo, Srinagar	-	11-07-90
197	Nanak Chand	-	-	11-07-90
198	Inder Kumar	Natipora, Srinagar	-	11-07-90
199	Shanker Nath	Shopian	Business	-
200	Raghu Nath	Tral, Pulwama	Service	12-07-90
201	Kameshwar Lal	Anantnag	-	12-07-90
202	Sultan Singh	Khoja Bagh, Srinagar	-	14-07-90
203	Jiwan Lal	Rainawari, Srinagar	-	15-07-90
204	Radha Krishen Koul	Ashmiji, Anantnag	-	16-07-90
205	Shiban Lal Koul	-do-	-	16-07-90
206	Anand Narayan	-	-	17-07-90
207	Mrs. Sahini	-	-	18-07-90
208	Durlabh Singh	Qazigund, Anantnag	Driver	18-07-90
209	Chand Ram Khar	Damjan, Anantnag	Service	18-07-90

210	Hansraj Suri	-	-	20-07-90
211	SS Abrol	Anantnag	Service	20-07-90
212	Roop Raj	Badgam	-do-	22-07-90
213	Janki Nath	Sumbal	-do-	26-07-90
214	Nath Ji	Anantnag	-do-	26-07-90
215	Ved Lal	Sopore	Principal	26-07-90
216	Badri Nath Wattal	Rainawari, Srinagar	Service	26-07-90
217	Bharat Bushen	Jammu	-	29-07-90
218	Autar Singh	-	-	29-07-90
219	Adarsh Jee	Baramulla	-	29-07-90
220	Gawri Shanker	Anantnag	-	29-07-90
221	Bharat Singh	Jammu	-	29-07-90
222	Omkar Nath Matoo	Dragbal, Pampore	-	30-07-90
223	Sundri Lal	Kangan, Srinagar	-	30-07-90
224	Mahesh Kumar	-	-	30-07-90
225	NG Sadhu	Manzgam, Anantnag	-	31-07-90
226	Virander Kumar Suri	Mandirbagh, Srinagar	-	-
227	Jia Krishan Bhan	Dribyar, Srinagar	-	02-08-90
228	Jawahar Lal	Tral, Pulwama	-	03-08-90
229	Gian Chand	Kishtwar	Govt. Servant	04-08-90
230	RK Handoo	Rainawari, Srinagar	MES	09-08-90
231	DN Chowdhary	Indra Nagar	Cement Factory	11-08-90
232	Arjan Nath	Shalipora, Budgam	-	09-08-90
233	Manoj Kumar	Kupwara	-	10-08-90
234	Saroop Naranyan	Pattan, Baramulla	-	10-08-90

235	Tarlok Chand	Achabal, Anantnag	-	11-08-90
236	Vasudev Pandit	Rohama, Anantnag	-	11-08-90
237	Roshan Lal Chowdary	Rainawari, Srinagar	-	11-08-90
238	Ms Babli Raina	Sopore	-	13-08-90
239	Darshan Koul	Anantnag	-	15-08-90
240	Masher Nath	Kupwara	-	16-08-90
241	Madan Mohan	Sopore	-	17-08-90
242	Baljeet Kour	-	-	17-08-90
243	Chand Ji Kher	Vessu, Anantnag		17-08-90
244	Rattan Lal Raina	Rainawari	J&K Bank	18-08-90
245	Shanker Nath Tiku	Wadwan, Badgam	-	21-08-90
246	RK Koul	Nai Sarak, Srinagar	TEO	24-08-90
247	BL Kak	Natipora, Srinagar	Asst. Exec. Engr.	26-08-90
248	Gopal Ram	Kokernag, Anantnag	-	28-08-90
249	Bansi Lal	Srinagar	-	29-08-90
250	Hari Singh	Anantnag	Police	30-08-90
251	Mahesh Chander	-	-	30-08-90
252	Omkar Nath	Baramulla	-	30-08-90
253	Shadi Lal Bhat	Anantnag	-	07-09-90
254	Makhan Lal	Srinagar	-	08-09-90
255	Hardey Nath	Wuyan, Pulwama	-	09-09-90
256	Trikha Ji	Ganderbal	-	10-09-90
257	Triloki Nath	Anantnag	-	11-09-90
258	Sham Singh	Batmaloo, Srinagar	-	12-09-90

259	Narender Singh	-do-	-	12-09-90
260	Ramesh Kumar	Khrew, Pulwama	-	12-09-90
261	Dr. Shuban Ji Khirdi	Rabab Sahib, Srinagar	-	14-10-90
262	Smt. Usha Ji	Srinagar	-	14-10-90
263	Smt. Neeta Ji	Srinagar	-	14-10-90
264	Prem Nath	Danger, Anantnag	-	17-10-90
265	Dwarika Nath	Moripora, Anantnag	-	13-09-90
266	Autar Krishen Raina	Chowalgam, Kulgam, Anantnag	-	14-09-90
267	Rattan Lal Pandita	Srinagar	-	16-09-90
268	Suresh Gupta	Maisuma, Srinagar	-	17-09-90
269	Mubash Singh	Padgampora, Anantnag	-	19-09-90
270	Prof D P Khazanchi	Srinagar	Professor	06-10-90
271	Ajay Kapoor	Mahrajgung, Srinagar	Wholesale cloth merchant	01-12-90

Appendix 'F'

Some of the Unidentified Bodies of Pandits recovered (List not Exhaustive)

Details	Area where body found	Date
Two women and three men killed by draining their blood.Women raped before being killed. Cut marks on arm veins, the only injury.Bodies recovered from Jhelum.	Sopore, Kashmir	27.01.1990
One person with his face burnt and body bullet- riddled. Nizam-e-Mustafa engraved on his thigh recovered.	Khanyar, Srinagar	30.01.1990
Four young men killed by draining their blood. Defaced by torture before being killed.	Chhanpora, Srinagar	05.02.1990
Bullet-riddled bodies of two men and one woman recovered with JKLF poster hanging from their necks.	Budgam Bus Stand, Srinagar	15.02.1990
One girl raped and then hanged.	Recovered from Jhelum near Bijbehara	17.02.1990
Dead bodies of five young men recovered with their eyes gouged out and bones broken. JKLF-Azadi engraved on their faces.	Ashmukam, Anantnag.	14.03.1990
Bullet-riddled bodies of a male and a female recovered.	Baramulla (behind Degree College)	26.03.1990
One male found hanging from a tree with JKLF poster hanging from his neck.	On the road side near Vicharnag, Srinagar	03.04.1990

One bullet-riddled male body.	Rotnipura, Pulwama	07.04.1990
Two old men and an old woman strangulated to death. Bodies recovered from an abandoned house.	Karfalimohalla, Srinagar	08.04.1990
One woman gang-raped and killed. Azadi painted on her forehead.	Near SKIMS, Soura, Srinagar	18.04.1990
One boy's body cut into pieces. 'Pandits leave or face death – JKLF', written on the trunk.	Outside Tyndale Biscoe Memorial School, Srinagar	24.04.1990
Mutilated bodies of three men recovered from an apple orchard. Killed by draining their blood.	Hyderpora	26.04.1990
Unidentified body recovered.	Khrew, Pulwama	26-04-90
Two bullet-riddled bodies of young boys recovered.	Duru, Anantnag	29.04.1990
Bodies of three men and a woman recovered from Dal Lake.	Srinagar	29.04.1990
Bullet-riddled body of a woman recovered.	Kupwara	01.05.1990
Body of a male recovered.	Kupwara	01-05-1990
One bullet-riddled body of a male recovered.	Tulamula, Srinagar	09.05.1990
Body of a male recovered.	Pulwama	10-05-1990
Young male body recovered from Jhelum.	Not Known	10-05-1990
One male body recovered.	Pulwama	10-05-90
Body of a young boy recovered.	Jhelum	10-05-90
An old man's body, killed by strangulation recovered. "Leave Govt Schools and Join Islamic Schools" written on a chit recovered from the pocket.	Village Aakur, Kashmir	12.05.1990
One male body recovered.	Srinagar	13-05-1990
Bullet-riddled body of an old male recovered.	Old Airport Road, Srinagar	18.05.1990
One male burnt body recovered.	Srinagar	24-05-1990
Bullet-riddled body of a woman recovered.	Kawdara, Srinagar	26.05.1990

Two young girls tortured to death.	Safakadal, Srinagar	27.05.1990
Dead body of an old man killed by strangulation. JKLF engraved on left arm.	Drabiyar, Srinagar	28.05.1990
Bodies of a male and female each recovered from road side; both killed by having been nailed on their forehead.	Batmalu, Srinagar	28.05.1990
One young man's bullet-riddled body, whose eyes had been gouged out, recovered.	Rainawari Srinagar	28.05.1990
One half-burnt body of a man recovered.	Nawakadal College, Srinagar	29.05.1990
A woman kidnapped, raped and cut into pieces.	Govt employee at Sopore	30.5.1990
Bodies of a boy and a girl recovered. They had been killed by draining their blood. Nizam-e-Mustafa was engraved on their forehead.	Behind J&K Bank, Anantnag	1.06.1990
A police constable kidnapped and killed.	Anantnag	03-06-1990
A man hanged to death.	Pulwama	10-06-1990
Five decomposed male bodies with torture marks and hands tied behind recovered from Jhelum.	Srinagar	12.06.1990
Body of a male with bullet marks recovered.	Baramulla	12-06-1990
Three bodies of young men found hanging from a tree in an orchard with JKLF poster placed around their neck.	Kulgam, Anantnag	15.06.1990
One male body with strangulation marks recover.	Shopian	22-06-1990
One male body recovered from Jhelum.	Srinagar	22-06-1990
One male body recovered from Manasbal Lake.	Manasbal, Srinagar	22-06-1990
Two men killed by strangulation. Threatening letters pasted on the bodies by Hizab-ul-Mujahideen.	One each from Badgam and Kupwara.	24.06.1990
A couple killed after being tied to a running vehicle.	Chak Hanjan, Anantnag	26-06-1990
One male hanged to death.	Pulwama	10.07.1990
One male bullet-riddled body recovered.	Badgam	11.07.1990

One man stabbed to death and a threatening letter from JKLF recovered from his pocket.	Srinagar	11.07.1990
One young man's dead body recovered.	Khannabal	29.07.1990
One male dead body found.	Kupwara	29.07.1990
One male dead body recovered.	Sopore	01-08-1990
Five male bodies recovered from river.	Near Baramulla from Jhelum	15.08.1990
Bodies of a male and a female recovered in decomposed state.	Behind SKIMS, Srinagar	27.06.1990
One girl raped and then stabbed to death.	Baramulla	7.09.1990
Three male bodies recovered from a river at Sumbal. Drowned after their hands and feet had been tied to stones.	Sumbal	17.09.1990
Four bullet-riddled bodies of young boys recovered.	General bus stand Batamallu, Srinagar	22.09.1990
A woman's mutilated body found.	Highway near Chowgal, Kupwara	30.09.1990
Bullet-riddled bodies of a man, woman and a girl child each recovered. JKLF painted on the walls of their house.	Alikadal, Srinagar	2.10.1990
One boy killed by cutting the veins of his arms and ankles and left to die.	Sanat Nagar, Srinagar	10.10.1990

Source: *Kashmir News Network, Report on the Impact of Migration on the Socio-economic Conditions of Kashmiri Displaced People;* Prepared by Jammu and Kashmir Centre for Minority Studies and *White Paper on Kashmir* prepared by Dr MK Teng and CL Guddu for Joint Human Rights Committee.

Appendix 'G'

Number of People Killed in the Valley Between January 1990 and April 2011

Number of militants killed	21,323
Civilians killed by militants	13,226
Civilians killed by security forces	3642
Security forces personnel killed by militants	5,369 (includes 1,500 Kashmiri Policemen)
Total people killed	43,560

Source: Jammu and Kashmir Government documents, reproduced in *The Times of India,* June 20, 2011.

Appendix 'H'

Temples Vandalised during Disturbances in February 1986

Anantnag District	
1	Anantnag Town: Two temples damaged and one looted.
2	Achhabal: One temple desecrated and garbage thrown on idols.
3	Moripura: One temple burnt completely.
4	Sagam: One temple demolished.
5	Naogam: One temple partially burnt.
6	Teelvani: One temple partially burnt.
7	Gautamnag: A two-storey temple burnt and it Dharamshala stoned.
8	Krangsoo: Temple priest assaulted.
9	Akura (Mattan): One temple and its entire property looted, and shed set on fire.
10	Dialgam: One temple heavily damaged by stoning.
11	Salar: One temple set on fire.
12	Aishmuqam: One temple set on fire.
13	Bijbihara Town: (a) Two temples completely looted; ancient idols, valued at more than Rs. 10 lakhs, broken. (b) 'Jai Devi' Temple desecrated and idols stolen.
14	Wanpoh (Gasipora): Two temples and Samadhi of Swami Dama Kak completely burnt.
15	Dhanav (Bogund): Two temples and one Dharamshala burnt.

16	Chogam: One temple stoned; its doors, windows and pillars broken.
17	One temple on the parikrama of the holy spring at Verinag damaged, doors broken, idols thrown into the spring.
18	Larkipora: Three temples of Goddess Durga, Siddha Lakshimi and Shiva completely burnt, idols broken in to pieces.
19	Fatehpura: One temple completely burnt along with its entrance gate. Ancient Shiva idol broken to pieces.
20	Quill (Pulwama): One temple partially damaged.
21	Trisal: One temple stoned, compound wall of another temple damaged.
22	Pawan Sandhya at Verinag converted into a mosque.
	Srinagar District
23	Ganpatyar (Srinagar): Temple heavily stoned and rockets fired at it.
24	Jawahar Nagar: Shiv Mandir desecrated and damaged; its property consigned to flames.
25	Maisuma: Dashnami Akhara, from where Chhari Mubarak (formal commencement of the pilgrimage) leaves for Holy Amarnath Cave, burnt.
26	Raghunath Mandir: Damaged by stoning.
27	Tullamulla: One temple in the village burnt.
28	Waskura: The famous temple of Mata Rupa Bhawani partially burnt.
29	Ganderbal: Two temples burnt and two damaged.
	Badgam District
30	Yachhgam: One temple partially damaged.
31	Badgam Town: Sharda temple damaged.
32.	Chadura: One temple damaged.

Kupwara District	
33.	Tekpora: One temple burnt.
34.	Lalpura: One temple burnt.
35.	Handwara: One temple damaged.
Baramulla District	
36.	Baramulla Town: One temple partially damaged.
37.	Vankura: One temple damaged completely.
38.	Sopore: One temple partially damaged.
39.	Bandipora: One temple partially burnt.

Appendix 'I'

Details of the Temples Destroyed/Vandalised in Kashmir in the First Phase of Militancy

Temples Destroyed

S.No.	Date of Occurrence	Description of Temple	FIR No	Police Station
District: Anantnag				
1	08.12.92	Gouree	81/92	Pahalgam
2	10.12.92	Shankar Temple Two Shivji Temples	278/92	Anantnag
3	8/9.12.92	Shivji Temple	45/92	Damhal- Honjipora
4	09.12.92	Temple	45/92	-do-
5	09.12.92	Temple	46/92	-do-
6	7/8.12.92	Two Shiva Temples	165/92	Kulgam
7	7/8.12.92	Shivalaya Temple	166/92	-do-
8	8/9.12.92	Temple	168/92	-do-
9	8/9.12.92	Shiva Temple	169/92	-do-
10	7/8.12.92	Two Temples	172/92	-do-
11	7/8.12.92	Shivalik Temple	173/92	-do-
12	7/8.12.92	Shiv Temple	42/92	Achabal
13	7/8.12.92	Shiv Temple	43/92	-do-
14	7.12.92	Temple	80/92	Dooru

15	7.12.92	Temple	81/92	-do-
16	7/8.12.92	Temple	84/92	-do
17	7/8.12.92	Ganesh Temple	91/92	-do-
18	7/8.12.92	Ganesh Temple	86/92	-do-
19	8.12.92	Temple	93/92	do-
20	13.12.92	Temple	45/92	Achabal
21	16.12.92	Temple	46/92	-do-
22	8.12.92	Temple	93/92	Dooru
23	8.12.92	Temple	171/92	Kulgam
24	8/9.12.92	Temple	178/92	-do-
25	8.12.92	Temple	40/92	Achabal
26	7/8.12.92	Temple	167/92	Kulgam
27	8.12.92	Temple	47/92	Hanjipoora
28	7/8.12.92	Temple	163/92	Kulgam
District: Baramulla				
1	7/8.12.92	Temple	185/92	Pattan
2	7/8.12.92	Temple	186/92	-do-
3	8.12.92	Two Temples	78/92	Panzulla
4	8.12.92	Temple	178/92	Sumbal
5	7.12.92	Temple	188/92	Oattar
6	15.12.92	Temple	71/92	Panzulla
District: Srinagar				
1	18.12.92	Temple	145/92	Ganderbal Narayan Bagh
2	18.12.92	Shamshan Bhoomi	84/92	Karan Nagar

3	8.12.92	Shiv Vaishnov Mandir	265/92	Bana Mohalla
District: Budgam				
1.	7/8.12.92	Temple	38/92	Chandpora
District: Kupwara				
1.	10.12.92	Temple		Watipora

SUMMARY

Anantnag=31, Baramulla=7, Budgam=1, Srinagar=3, Kupwara=1

Besides the above mentioned details, 7 temples were destroyed in Doda and 2 in Rajouri District

Temples Vandalised

Sl. No	Name of Temple	Location Village/Town	District	Remarks
1	Vamu Mandir	Verinag	Anantnag	Ancient idol desecrated/ removed.
2	Temple on the spring	Verinag	Anantnag	Burnt.
3	Vitasta Mandir (Vetha-Votur)	Verinag	Anantnag	Temple as ancient as river Jhelum itself, burnt. Two three-storeyed dharamshallas destroyed.
4	Buna Gund Mandir	Verinag	Anantnag	Burnt.
5	Two Dharamsallas at Manzgam Mandir	Tehsil Kulgam	Anantnag	This temple is also known as Khir Bhawani Mandir. Burnt after removing entire moveable property.
6	Uma Nagri Mandir	Brari Angan	Anantnag	Sri Swami Shyamanand wrote a letter about this incident.
7	Kantiyani Mandir	Kakran	Anantnag	Blasted and damaged.
8	Mirhama Mandir	Mirhama Kulgam	Anantnag	Burnt.

9	Two Ancient Shrines	Hanad, Chowalgam	Anantnag	Burnt.
10	Kulwagishori Mandir	Kulgam	Anantnag	Idols, pictures and scriptures desecrated. Dharmshalla burnt.
11	Devsar Mandir	Devsar, Kulgam	Anantnag	Burnt.
12	Ancient temple Tripor Sondri Khanabarni	Devsar, Kulgam	Anantnag	Burnt to ashes alongwith three dharamshallas and havan shallas.
13	Luka Bhawan	Larkipora	Anantnag	Three temples and Dharam shalla burnt. These had been damaged in 1986 and subsequently repaired.
14	Botsar Mandir and Ashram	Uttarsoo	Anantnag	As per police control room written report, the temple, 8 houses, 2 cowsheds and 2 kothars were set on fire.
15	Temple	Pahalgam	Anantnag	The tin-shed of Pahalgam temple gutted partially. Fire was controlled in time by fire services as per police control room report.
16	Shiv Mandir	Sheer Gunj	Anantnag	As per police control room written report, the temple, 6 residential houses, 4 cowsheds, 2 kothars of Pandits were set on fire on 8.12.1992.
17	Ashmuji Mandir	Kulgam	Anantnag	Burnt along with dharamshalla.
18	Temple	Chatargul	Anantnag	As per police control room record, one temple at Chatargul, Achabal was set on fire.
19	Temple	Harad Chanan	Rafiabad, Baramulla	Written report of police control room confirms that militants attempted to set on fire the temple at Harchanan on 11-12/12/92, but it got partially damaged.

20	Temple	Palhalan	-do-	During the night 9/10 December. 1992, militants set on fire a place of worship at village Palhalan (Pattan) reveals a written report of police control room. Later this incident was conformed.
21	Temple	Karihama	-do-	Burnt.
22	Temple	Kreri	-do-	Burnt.
23	Shiv Vaishnov Mandir	Baramulla	Located on the bank of Jhelum	Burnt. (Not the same as Shilputri temple damaged in 1990).
24	Nandkeshwar Bairav Nath Temple	Sumbal	-do-	Written report of police control room reveals that it was set on fire on December 8, 1992, but suffered only minor damage.
25	Temple	Nowgam	Budgam	Burnt.
26	Temple	Bana Mohalla on Jhelum	Srinagar	Burnt.
27	Temple and Shed at crematorium	Karan Nagar	-do-	According to police control room, temple and shed gutted. Cause of fire was mob attack.
28	Magarmal Bagh Mandir	Srinagar (in the vicinity of police lines)	-do-	Burnt.
29	Kunzer Mandir	Kunzer	Baramulla	Burnt.
30	Karihama Mandir	Karihama	Budgam	Burnt.
31	Karfali Mohalla Mandir	Srinagar	Srinagar	Damaged.
32	Temple	Areh, Kulgam	Anantnag	Burnt.
33	Bata Gund Mandir	Handwara	Kupwara	Burnt.

34	Chowgal Mandir	Handwara	Kupwara	Burnt.
35	Chak Narayan Dass Mandir	Tangmarg	Baramulla	Burnt.
36	Temple	Narayan Bagh, Shadipora	Baramulla	Police control room report confirms it was burnt by throwing grenades in the temple.
37	Bhairav Nath Mandir	Narsing Garh, Karan Nagar	Srinagar	Burnt by mobs in broad day light.
38	Sri Sanatan Dharam Sabha Buildings Amira Kadal	Srinagar	Srinagar	As per Radio Kashmir, Kashmir Times, Daily Excelsior and eyewitness, the buildings were set on fire by mobs.

Source: Published by Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch (February-March 1993) on the basis of countless eyewitness accounts and reports published in:

— *The Statesman*, March 5, 1986

— *The Hindu*, March 4, 1986

— *The Telegraph*, March 4, 1986

— *The Hindustan Times*, March 3, 1986 (Editorial)

— *Kashmir Samiti*, New Delhi.

— *The Martand*, Srinagar.

Note: Besides these, there are numerous other temples located in remote villages, which are not included here, either because these had already been usurped or it was too dangerous for investigators to go there.

Appendix 'J'

Land Owned by the Kashmiri Pandits and Left Behind in Kashmir Valley

Sl. No.	District	Year of Migration	Description of land						Total		Kind of Crop	Whether self managed		Whether under tenancy		No. of walnut trees	Other trees	Land under unauthorised occupation
			Agriculture		Orchard		Vacant											
			Kls.	Mls	Kls	Mls	Kls	Mls	Kls	Mls		Kls	Mls	Kls	Mls			
1	Srinagar	1990	4596	16	3625	4	-	-	8222	-	Paddy/ Fruits	7063.14		1158.06		-	45743 Nos.	-
2	Budgam	1990	5357	10	1400	½	-	-	6757	10½	Paddy/ Fruits	4960.11		1796.19	½	816	15701 Nos.	-
3	Anantnag	1990	21900	0	5375	10	2647	0	29922	10	Paddy/ Fruits	-		-		4629	-	-
4	Pulwama	1990	8427	4½	5762	½	-	-	14189	5	Paddy/ Fruits	12127	3	2062	6	2169	25063 Nos.	-
5	Baramulla	1990	3922	15	8263	½	1291	16½	13477	12	Paddy/ Fruits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	Kupwara	1990	9168	5	3102	17	1098	-	13369	2	Paddy/ Fruits	10058.11		1127.03		1948	12471 Nos.	-
	Total		53372	10½	27528	12½	5036	16½	85937	19½						51462	98978	

Legend: Kls — Kanals (one kanal is equal to 506 sq m)
Mls — Marlas (one marla is equal to 25.3 sq m)
Twenty marlas make a kanal.

Source: J&K Centre and for Minority Studies Report on the Impact by Migration on the Socio-economic Conditions of Kashmiri *Displayed People*. *Annex IV (b), p. 356.*

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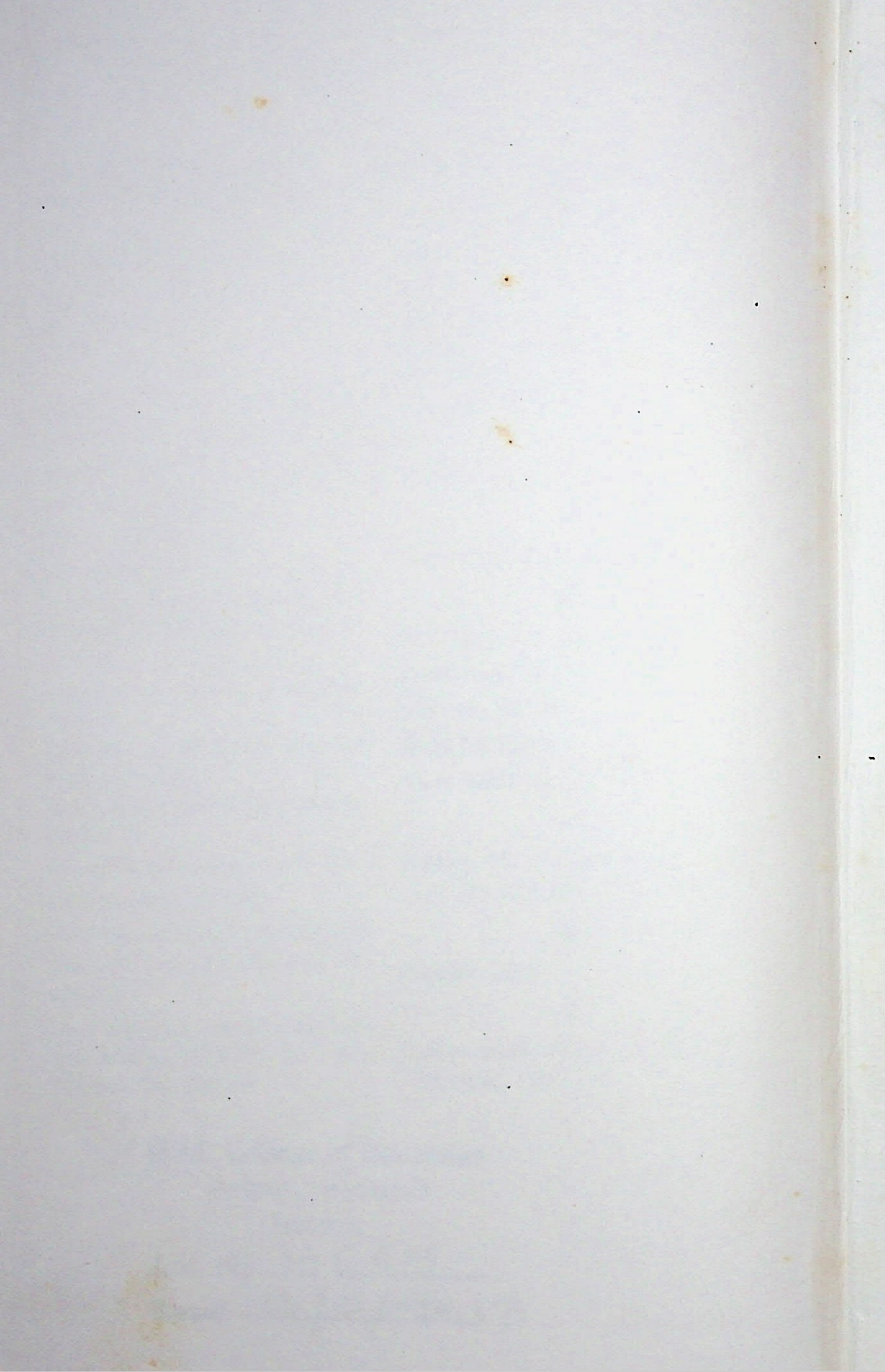
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He is an M.Sc. in Defence Studies from Madras University. He was awarded a Ph.D. in defence studies in 2012.

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